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REPORT OF A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION MISSION IN INDIA

23 November 1958—3 April 1959

Prepared for the Government of India
by

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This report is not an official document of the United Nations, but a paper especially prepared by a mission appointed under the United Nations Technical Assistance Programme as their final report to the Government of India.

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PREFACE

1. The views expressed in this report are those of members of the Community Development Evaluation Mission organized at the request from the Government of India by the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration (TAA). The Mission, appointed by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Government of India, consisted of the following members:

Mr. M. J. Coldwell (Canada),

Professor René Fernand Dumont (France), and

Dr. Margaret Read (United Kingdom).

Mr. A. Wojcicki (Community Development Officer, Division of Social Affairs, Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East) was assigned to the Mission as Secretary.

2. Under its terms of reference, the Mission held a broad assignment to assess the results so far achieved by the community development programme in India, its basic objectives, its actual impact on the process of general development and of changing attitudes in the villages, and its capacity to contribute to the economic advancement of the country.

3. The Mission assembled in New York on 23 November 1958, and had preliminary briefings at United Nations Headquarters with the departments concerned with the subject of the Mission, and with other individuals with special knowledge of the community development programme in India.

4. The Mission arrived in New Delhi on 5 December 1958. There its members had interviews with the Minister for Community Development and Co-operation, and with the Ministers of Health, Food and Agriculture, Education, Commerce and Industry, and Small-Scale Industries. They also met the members of the Planning Commission and the Programme Evaluation Organization, the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Tribes, the Chairman of the Central Social Welfare Board and a number of leaders occupying positions in government or serving with voluntary organizations. The Mission had interviews with officials in the regional offices of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the World Health Organization (WHO). The Mission also learned about the projects and general scope of assistance provided under bilateral assistance (United States Government, Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Indo-Norwegian Fisheries Project) and other international programmes such as the Colombo Plan.

5. The field visits began on 17 December 1958 and were carried on until 3 March 1959. In the course of its field trips, the Mission visited a large number of villages, and also training centres, research institutes, co-operative unions, training-*cum*-production centres for artisans, schools and other institutions related to the community development programme. It had consultations with community development staff, state officials, voluntary leaders at the block, district and state level, and field personnel

of the Programme Evaluation Organization in the following States: Andhra Pradesh, Bombay, Kerala, Madras, Madhya Pradesh, Mysore, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. In addition, individual members of the Mission visited Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal.

6. On arrival in each State, the Mission had an introductory meeting with heads of departments or with the development commissioner and his staff. It proved possible both to visit the villages which had been prepared for the Mission's arrival, and also some villages which had not been forewarned.

7. In the course of its visits, the Mission was offered by the Government of India and the State authorities the greatest possible co-operation, including transport facilities, hospitality, and opportunities for open and frank discussion at every level. The members of the Mission are greatly indebted to the large number of Indian people who facilitated their work and requests the Minister of Community Development and Co-operation to convey to all of them the Mission's gratitude. The Mission is particularly grateful to Mr. D. R. Bhatia, Under-Secretary, Ministry for Community Development and Co-operation, who acted as liaison officer and spared neither time nor energy to make the itinerary as efficient as possible.

8. In drafting the present report, the Mission had in mind that its primary function was a general appraisal of community development programme, and therefore the comments are, on the whole, limited to the most important general problems. No specific recommendations are included, though a number of suggestions are contained in the various chapters.

9. The Mission realizes that, in the brief time available, an appraisal of this country-wide programme, which already covers half of the population of India and is intended to reach all the villages of India within the next few years, was a formidable task.

10. The Mission was impressed by the extent of the plans promoted by the Government of India to raise standards of living among approximately 400 million people, and it approached its assignment with humility and with an understanding of the difficulties involved in carrying out such a programme. It wishes to emphasize again that its work was facilitated by the available analyses of the community development programme in the annual and special reports of the programme Evaluation Organization, and in the report prepared by the Team for the Study of Community Projects and National Extension Service of the Committee on Plan Projects of the Planning Commission. The Mission realizes that the people of India know all the difficulties and problems which they encounter in their efforts to raise standards of living and that outsiders can only offer suggestions based on experience elsewhere.

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

11. India today is a country of about 400 million people, the great majority of whom live in villages and depend upon farming for their subsistence. The economic under-development and poverty of India are due, in part, to the dominance of agriculture in the economy. A country with 70 per cent or more of its labour force engaged in agriculture cannot achieve a high level of production and consumption unless exports are extraordinarily high: the nation will be too absorbed in meeting the primary requirement of existence—food production—to leave much energy or resources to cover other needs. The problem of India, however, is not only the relative size of the agricultural sector; it is primarily, one of under-production in this sector.. With most of its manpower engaged in agriculture, India has, nevertheless, had to import food from foreign countries in recent years—largely from the United States, where only 10 per cent of the labour force is now engaged in agriculture.

12. An obvious answer to over-population and under-production in agriculture is the development of industries that will absorb manpower and permit mechanized production. Thus, industrialization is currently India's primary goal. The very facts rural over-population and under-production, however, make it difficult to achieve this goal. In this respect, parallels to the historical experiences of European countries should not be drawn too readily. In the first place, Indian agriculture does not provide a sufficient surplus of wealth from which large-scale investment for industrialization could be derived. This is not to deny that there is a considerable potential of income derived from agriculture in the form of rents and of interest on farm loans that might be used for productive investment in industry but is not so used. Furthermore, the extreme poverty of the agricultural sector implies limited capacity to buy the products of industry. It is true that certain cheap factory-made goods of domestic or foreign origin, such as cloth and simple household utensils, have, over the years, captured fairly wide rural market, replacing similar goods produced by village artisans. A major result has been to throw such artisans out of work and to increase pressure upon the land; urban industry has not been able to absorb the extra manpower thus created. A number of important urban industries have been established in India and the country has, in fact, been described as semi-industrialized, but the percentage of the labour force working in the manufacturing industries, urban and rural combined, is today little greater, if at all, than it was fifty years ago. The seriousness of the village unemployment problem has persuaded the Government to adopt a widely-debated policy of favouring—against competitive and more efficient urban industries—the expansion of village industries because of their greater capacity to provide employment. Simultaneously, an attempt has been made to modernize these village industries.

13. There is another complicating factor: any serious shift of man-power from agriculture to industry in India will require a substantial increase in food production. One hundred industrial families require

more food production than one hundred farm families because of higher demand, the wastages in transport, storage and retailing, the ability of farm families to make use of non-marketed or incidental foods, etc. Experience has shown that, without an increase of food supply to accompany industrialization, a disruptive inflation of food prices is apt to occur.

14. For these and similar reasons, the Government of India has attached great importance to the expansion of agricultural production, along with industrial expansion. The allocations in the first and second Five-Year Plans reflect this point of view. The growth of agricultural production to date, however, has not been too encouraging.

15. Under-production in the farmlands of India is tied in with over-population. Too many people crowd each square mile of farmland and the average farmer, does not have enough land to produce an adequate crop with his limited technical resources, although there are variations among the States in population density. The severity of population pressure on the land, and the lack of outlets to sparsely populated territories or frontier lands, constitute one good reason why it is misleading to draw too close a parallel to nineteenth century economic development in Europe.

16. An appreciable shift of population from agriculture to industry and ancillary services would leave more land and provide a larger income for the average farmer. It would not, however, meet the national need for a substantially larger total agricultural production without increases in acreage sown, yield and farm workers' productivity are essential.

17. There actually seems to be little prospect that population pressure on the land in India can be reduced in the near future, and the country will be fortunate indeed if there is not a critical increase in this pressure. Between 1941 and 1951, according to available data, some 20.2 million persons were added to the labour force; of these, 14·2 million went into agriculture, 5·7 million into services and only 300,000 into industry. It is hardly to be expected that this trend can soon be reversed so that the number of workers in agriculture will decline or remain constant. In European countries such as France, Germany Italy and Sweden, the absolute numbers of agricultural workers continued to expand until about 1920, even though those countries were quite industrialized by then.

18. India, therefore, faces the prospect that its agricultural population, already excessive, will continue to grow, and, in all probability, to grow very rapidly, unless there is a marked expansion of industry combined with a considerable decline in the birth rate.

19. The future population trend of India is currently a subject of much interest and discussion. It is necessarily speculative, as are all demographic projections. The very existence of such trend projections may, however, set into motion forces that will counteract these trends. It is thus possible that current predictions of a tremendous growth of the Indian population will help to lead to effective action to prevent such a development. On the other hand, this may not come about and the mortality rate may decline more rapidly than anticipated as a result of the ease with which modern medical means such as DDT and the antibiotics can eliminate endemic and infectious diseases; the birth rate would

then remain at a high level and perhaps even rise because of better health. Rapid decline in mortality and continued high fertility have been characteristic of a number of economically under-developed countries in recent years, and the resulting increase of population in those countries has generally proved much greater than expected. If such is to be the pattern of India's demographic future, the Indian population may well double in the next thirty years and reach 800 million by 1989 [1].

20. The speed with which mortality rates become "modernized" while fertility rates remain traditional is an example of a larger problem of economic and social development. Modern techniques that require only passive acquiescence on the part of the population (such as DDT spraying) are much easier to introduce than are changes in human habits and institutions, which require active involvement and participation of the people. Yet without these latter changes, development will be unbalanced, incomplete and, in the long run, ineffectual. Broadly speaking, the growth of industries, the application of new agricultural techniques, the use of savings for productive investment, economic enterprise and other ingredients of economic development are not merely impersonal processes, but forms of human behaviour which require new motivations, attitudes and skills. The problem of change is particularly difficult in the villages of India, where the force of ancient culture is still strong and pervasive and where two of the major traditional systems, the land tenure system and the caste system, are inherently conservative and opposed to change. There is much that needs to be done and that can be done to improve life in the Indian villages, provided the people will accept to change their habits and institutions.

21. While change can be brought about by compulsion, India has chosen the way which involves local initiative and voluntary co-operation. This is the method of community development as applied in rural areas. A major aim is to increase agricultural production and support industrialization. That is not, however, the only aim, nor the ultimate aim, which is to raise the levels of living of the people, in both a material and a non-material sense.

22. The Government of India has embraced the goals of the "welfare state". A highly modern set of social objectives has been adopted—far more advanced than the social objectives of the now developed countries when they were at a similar level of industrialization. The problem is how to make the social programmes support rather than impair higher production; without increase in production, welfare programmes will only lead to bankruptcy.

23. The task of community development is of great magnitude. India today has one of the lowest *per capita* national incomes in the world, and the average rural income is estimated at considerably less than half of the average urban income.[2] The disease rates are among the highest

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1 This possibility is the extreme of several projections made by Coale and Hoover in *Population Growth and Economic Development in Low-Income Countries, a case study of India's prospects* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1958).

2 See H. Singer, "Mechanics of Economic Development", *Indian Economic Review* (Rao, Delhi, 1952).

in the world. Less than half of the children of India were in school in 1955-56 (50 per cent of the 6 to 11 age-group and 20 per cent of the 11 to 13 age-group were enrolled). Only 12 to 16 per cent of the rural population was literate in 1951.[3] Housing is bad everywhere and may be deteriorating with the population increase. There is no security against crop failure and the ravages of nature. While famines of the type prevailing in the immediate post-war years have apparently been conquered, there is still wide-spread malnutrition, due mostly to the poor quality of the diet and local and seasonal shortages of grain (see Chapter IV below).

24. The community development programme is attempting to meet all of these problems through an integrated, comprehensive approach which is simultaneously economic and social, aimed at both future production and current welfare. Its theory is that change cannot take place in isolated fragments of a society, but must be a total process, involving the total person and the entire community. The energies upon which it depends are mainly those of the people; the chief source of capital upon which it must draw is the surplus labour of the villagers.

25. No country has undertaken community development on as wide a scale as India. It is one of the major experiments of the twentieth century, and its results are of world-wide interest.

[3] The estimates of literacy in India in 1958 range between 21 and 25 per cent.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGINS AND GROWTH OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

26. On 2 October 1952 the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, the Government of India launched community development projects in 55 pilot project areas all over the country.

27. As a pilot programme, it was regarded as an experiment in testing village people's reactions to new ideas and practices, and was intended also to give the Administration quickly some essential factual knowledge to guide further expansion.

28. The roots of community development, however, go much deeper than the pilot projects of 1952. This new movement was, from its beginning, associated throughout the country with the name of Mahatma Gandhi. Throughout his long life of service to the people of India, he had taught and demonstrated the need for the uplift of the rural masses. His practical idealism had given new encouragement and new inspiration to many voluntary services which had sprung up in India since the beginning of this century, such as the Servants of India Society, organized by Gokhale in 1906, and the Servants of the People Society, which began in 1920. These and many similar movements attracted young men dedicated to the service of their people, many of whom later became leaders in Indian life.

29. Mahatma Gandhi's "constructive programme", outlined in a pamphlet[4] written by him was expanded[5] by Rajendra Prasad, who later became the first President of India. Many other writers took up the same themes. The main ideas in these writings formed the core of a comprehensive village development programme, and they were incorporated to a considerable extent in the present national community development programme.

30. Inspired by the influence of the Mahatma's ideas, the states of Bombay, Madras and Uttar Pradesh initiated rural development schemes, enlisting the efforts of individuals and voluntary societies for a comprehensive rural programme. A common feature of all these schemes was the application of the concept of "constructive work" to large rural areas, the provision of state funds, and help in the selection of personnel.

31. The Congress Party government of Uttar Pradesh, on assuming office in 1937, established a separate Rural Development Department responsible for executing a programme of rural reconstruction throughout the state. This programme had not proceeded very far when the Second World War intervened and the Congress government resigned. When it returned to office in 1946, the task of improving conditions in the villages was again taken in hand.

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[4] M. K. Gandhi, *Constructive Programme. Its Meaning and Place* (first published 1941).

[5] Rajendra Prasad, *Constructive Programme. Some Suggestions*, Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, 1942.

32. A pilot development project was launched in the Etawah district in October 1948. The distinguishing feature of the Etawah project was an integrated scheme, in which the technical workers were part of the over-all village team, seeking the co-operation of the village community and assisting a new type of worker at the village level, called a multi-purpose worker.

33. In Madras state, a rural welfare scheme, known as the Firka Development Scheme, aimed at improving village conditions, was launched in 1946 in 34 selected "firkas" or groups of villages, and gradually extended to additional areas. In 1953, it covered 84 firkas, comprising 2,400 villages.

34. In Bombay state, the "Sarvodaya Scheme"[6] was launched in 1948. Designed primarily to help the least developed classes, it covered principally tribal areas and is still being carried on in this state side by side with the national community development programme.

35. Another, rather different, type of programme, which has assumed great importance at the present time, was the "Grow More Food Campaign" launched by the Government in the late nineteen thirties. It was the relative failure of this exclusively agricultural programme that gave the believers in the multi-purpose approach a strong argument in favour of undertaking a national community development programme as possibly being a better method of increasing food production as well.

36. Since its inception, the community development programme in India has been influenced by the ideals of social justice which originated in Mahatma Gandhi's teachings and were written into the new Constitution. Inherent also in the Constitution was the establishment of a "welfare state" as the basic objective of the nation and hence applying to all sections of the population. Special provisions were, however, made in the Constitution for the welfare of tribal peoples, scheduled castes and other under-privileged groups.

37. One of the important experiences which helped to bring the new community development programme into existence was the inspiring example of self-help demonstrated in the building of refugee townships and, in particular, the experiments at Nilokheri and the first camps near Kurukshetra.[7]

38. The formal community development programme was initiated in 1952, as an experimental measure. Each of the 55 projects covered about three blocks—that is, three units of about 100 villages with a population of about 66,000 and an area of about 150 square miles each. The budget provision was 6·5 million rupees. In October 1953, a National Extension Service (NES) was established, with the initial aim of covering about one fourth of the country with NES blocks during the first Five Year Plan period, or a total of 1,200 blocks. Each NES block had a budget provision of 450,000 rupees for a three-year period. In addition to the 55 community projects mentioned above, 53 community development blocks were also allotted, with a budget of 1·5 million rupees.

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[6] See Government of Bombay, *Report of the Sarvodaya Scheme Evaluation Committee*, 1956.

[7] The title *Kurukshetra* was given to the monthly periodical on community development in India. The name symbolizes the fight between the forces of good and evil in the epics of India and also self-help efforts at the time of partition.

39. During the second Five-Year Plan period, the cost of the NES blocks was reduced from 450,000 to 400,000 rupees each. During a further three-year period of intensive development, an additional provision of 800,000 rupees was made.

40. This intensive phase was followed by a phase of less intensive development, during which each block was allotted 30,000 rupees annually.

41. On the recommendation of the Committee on Planned Projects, the National Development Council decided to revise the programme as follows:

(1) The target date for complete coverage of the country was deferred from March 1961 to October 1963;

(2) The distinction between the National Extensive Service and community development stages was abolished. Instead, only two stages of block development were envisaged: stage I, for a period of five years with a budget provision of 1·2 million rupees, and stage II, for a further five-year period, with a budget provision of 500,000 rupees;

(3) In view of the emphasis on agricultural production, each block was to have a pre-extension period of one year, to be devoted exclusively to agricultural development.

42. Repeated warnings about a too rapid expansion were made in the annual reports of the Programme Evaluation Organization. This quasi-independent organization, working under the Planning Commission was created at the same time as the Community Projects Administration in order to provide an independent appraisal of the programme.

43. The Programme Evaluation Organization, directed by a board with an independent chairman, is financed by funds from the National Government, and has research staff in the field and at headquarters drawn from among specialists in economics, sociology, public administration and allied fields. The members of the field staff, increased in 1958 from 26 to 45 persons, make a continuous evaluation of the programme in the blocks where they are posted and in one or two neighbouring blocks. On the basis of these sample surveys, the Programme Evaluation Organization draws up an annual report. In addition, the Organization has produced special detailed reports on such subjects as panchayats (village councils), co-operatives, the functions of the social education organizer and village-level worker, and on the people's participation.

44. The Programme Evaluation Organization's annual report is not only the main document for discussion on community development in Parliament and at the annual conferences of the Development Commissioners, but is also widely discussed by the Press, which makes it headline news on the day of its appearance throughout India. Additional forums for the discussion of these evaluation reports are provided by the intra-state and regional seminars in which persons from all levels of programme planning and operation participated. With all the publicity given to the community development programme and its continuous appraisal, the steady demand for increased funds and personnel began to arouse criticism from various sources. First, some of the new features of the programme invited criticism from those who preferred more conservative

methods of development. Secondly, the scope and content of the programme aroused the attention of political forces—both the party in power and the opposition. Finally, international interest, exemplified by many visitors, and some of the external assistance provided during the first years of the programme, added to the controversy as to whether the programme was the right solution for rural India, and whether it was proceeding in the right direction and at a sufficiently fast pace.

45. It was at this stage that the National Development Council, aware of criticism coming from Parliament concerning the large and growing outlay involved in the second Five-Year Plan as well as in the community development programme, decided to make another appraisal of the programme by a specially constituted Team for the Study of Community Development and National Extension Service.

46. The team, led by Sri Balvantray G. Mehta, Member of Parliament and Chairman of the Estimates Committee, spent over six months in field studies and discussions with state authorities. Its report[8] was a detailed appraisal of community development programmes. The team endorsed the expansion of community development, but recommended far-reaching changes, most of which were quickly approved by the National Development Council. In the light of this report[9], the community development programme was revised, from 1 April 1958, in a number of important directions.

47. Two special features of the Mehta Report should, however, be noted here:

(1) The tempo of expansion of the community development programme was found to be too fast and many of the defects of the programme were attributed to this rapid expansion. Hence, instead of having the whole country covered by the community development programme by the end of the second Five-Year Plan in 1961, the Report recommended a two-year postponement, which the Government approved. The present objective is thus to cover the whole country by October 1963—ten years after the launching of the National Extension Service. This decision means that almost half of the country has to be covered in the forthcoming four years;

(2) In order to facilitate expansion, the Mehta Report recommended that blocks should go through a "pre-extension" phase, lasting for one year. In view of the renewed emphasis on agricultural production, each stage I block coming into existence in 1959 should have a one-year period of pre-extension activity exclusively in the field of agriculture. Provisions have been made for giving this type of block a skeleton staff consisting of one block development officer, one agricultural extension officer, and five fully trained village level workers. This staff will normally be absorbed later in the block's staffing pattern when it enters stage II.

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[8] Government of India Planning Commission, Committee on Planned Projects, *Report of the Team for the Study of Community Projects and National Extension Service*, New Delhi, 1957 3 vols.

[9] This document will be referred to below as the Mehta Report.

48. When the mission arrived in India on 5 December 1958, the recommendations contained in the Mehta Report were in the course of being implemented and the community development programme covered already almost half of the country.

49. At the beginning of 1959, the Ministry of Community Development had its responsibilities enlarged by the transfer of local government dealing with panchayats and by the transfer of the Department of Co-operatives. The title of the Ministry was changed to that of Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation.

Chapter III

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

A. Formulation of Policy

50. The policy for community development in India is formulated at the central and state levels, but country-wide consultations are carried out in all-India conferences or seminars on particular subjects or on specific problems, such as training.

51. Since its inception, the community development programme has had strong support at the Centre from the top political leaders of the country. No efforts have been spared, however, to make the states full participants in the evolution and amendment of policies and procedures. The decisions on policies at the highest level are taken by the National Development Council and the Central (Community Development) Committee. The National Development Council, with the Prime Minister as chairman and the Chief Ministers of the states as members, is the highest planning authority of the country and deals with major questions of policy relating to the five year plans; it is served by the Planning Commisison. The Council's discussion of the community development programme is limited to major decisions which might affect the scope and content of the five year plans.

52. The Central Committee, of which the Prime Minister is chairman, consists of members of the Planning Commission, the deputy chairman of the Planning Commission, the Ministers for Food and Agriculture, and for Community Development and Co-operation. This Committee is both the policy-making and co-ordinating body of the community development programme. It meets quarterly and, apart from discussing important questions of policy, reviews the progress made.

53. The Minister for Community Development, at the Centre, is responsible for the detailed preparation of data for policy formulation, for guidance and assistance to the states in the implementation of the programme, and for the administration of some inter-state training centres for higher echelon staff. To provide co-ordination between the Ministry for Community Development and the ministries which contribute to the over-all community development programme, such as the Ministries for Food and Agriculture, Health, Education and Commerce and Industry, a number of permanent co-ordination committees, have been established composed of the above-named ministers and their senior staffs.

54. An important landmark in policy making is the annual All-India Conference on Community Development, attended by the Centre Ministers for Community Development, together with development commissioners and senior staff from the Ministry for Community Development and Co-operation, and certain staff from other ministries. The proceedings of this conference are published in full and contain a review of the past year's work and recommendations for future developments.

55. The Central Parliament and state legislatures also play an important part in policy determination. The annual budgetary debate in Parliament provides a forum for the discussion of the programme's achievements. In addition, a Central Consultative Committee on Community Development, consisting of members of Parliament, meets frequently at Delhi for informal discussions on community development policy and advises the Ministry on its programme. Similar consultative committees including members of Parliament and state legislatures are organized at the state level. These and other, less formal, opportunities for discussion of the programme are indicative of the broad basis on which the formulation of community development policy rests. This is reflected in the lively interest in community development demonstrated by the Press, both at the national and state levels.

56. The Mission had the opportunity of highly informative discussions with the various informal consultative committees mentioned above. Their members showed a keen interest in the economic and social problems facing the national and State Governments and in the community development programme. Since all parties support planned community development, the Mission suggests that members of Parliament and of the state legislatures might assume an even greater responsibility for leadership in this movement for rural improvement. The prestige of elected members of public bodies should be used as effectively as possible in support of the plan and of the officials charged with the responsibility of putting it into effect. India's rural improvement problem is, in no small measure, in the best sense of the term a political one. Consequently, responsibility for its success lies heavily on the people's representatives at all levels of government.

57. Although the community development programme was initiated and undertaken with particular vigour by the party which is currently in power—the Congress Party—and is defended by it in parliamentary discussions at the Central and State levels, the opposition parties, as has just been pointed out, also support the programme as a whole and only criticize its shortcomings and inadequate implementation. In fact, no other programme which would offer an alternative solution of rural problems or seriously challenge the present policy has so far been put forward by any political party.

58. The review of community development policy, both in the legislative bodies and in public, is aided by the regular and periodical evaluations of the relevant programmes mentioned in the Chapter II above.

59. The Mission noted that the annual report of the Programme Evaluation Organization provides basic material for discussion at the annual All-India Conference on Community Development which is usually convened in May. The report is available only a few days before the conference, and sometimes only once the conference is in session. This arrangement does not allow for serious consideration of suggestions provided in the evaluation report at the State, district and block levels. The Mission suggests that a document of such importance should be available for earlier study and discussion at the block and district level and that discussion at the All-India Conference level should not take place until all concerned have had an opportunity to express their views at a state-level conference. The states' delegations to the All-India

Conference would then be in a much better position to formulate views on the proposed changes in the programme. In order, however, to allow for longer consultations on the evaluation report, it might be necessary to change from annual to biennial reports. In 1959, the community development programme entered its seventh year of operation, and it should, henceforth, not be subjected to such frequent changes in its pattern of administration and its programme content as was the case during the formative years. Furthermore, the Programme Evaluation Organization, given more time for the preparation of a general biennial report, might turn its resources and energies towards making studies of selected problems and case studies of selected villages or blocks. Such studies are needed not only for a deeper analysis of the processes which are taking place in the areas subject to the community development programme, but also to provide indispensable material for personnel training.

60. While the mechanisms for the formulation of broad policies have been described, India's community development policy lays stress on planning at the actual village level. The various aspects of the latter type of planning will be discussed in Chapters IV to VI below.

61. The all-India and State plans for community development are passed on to the village people through the block. In one sense, therefore, the over-all community development programme has, to a certain extent, constituted a plan dictated from above. That, however, is taking too narrow a view of the process by which block officials and advisory committees, and, still more, village people, accept or put on one side this or that aspect of improvements in their farms and villages. The over-all plan which sets out general policy must thus be clearly distinguished from the kind of village planning dealt with in the ensuing chapters. Part of the task of those who administer the community development programme is to relate one kind of plan to the other, a process not unknown in the public administration of service departments.

B. Administration of Community Development Programmes.

62. Apart from its discussion with the Ministry of Community Development of the Central Government, the Mission was also able to discuss its findings with officials of other ministries. In these discussions, the Mission was aware of the problems—sometimes both difficult and delicate—which arise in a relatively new programme which needs the support of so many old-established government departments. The Mission was also aware of the increasing demands that are being made on certain departments, such as those dealing with agriculture, health and education, due to the success of the community development movement in raising the expectations of the villagers. Although the Ministry of Community Development has the major responsibility for its programme, it is nevertheless only by a co-ordinated effort that the goals of the programme can be reached.

63. This continuous and sensitive co-ordination is not only seen in inter-departmental work at the Centre. It is inherent in the relations between the Centre and the states in carrying out community development programmes. The States have virtual autonomy in the administration of health, education, agriculture, co-operatives, rural industries, and therefore have to plan their own internal co-ordination in community development, as well as co-operating with the Centre in these fields.

64. The Mehta Report was strongly in favour of even more emphasis being laid on State responsibility. The Mission endorsed the statement in the Report that

> "it is adequate for the Centre to lay down the policy and prescribe the broad outlines of a scheme, and then leave it to the State governments to work it out in accordance with their own practices and in consonance with the local circumstances."

This recognition of the States' full responsibility for adapting programmes relating to several aspects of rural life would confirm the Mission's opinion that there was sometimes too much rigidity in the application of community development programmes sent out by the Centre.[10] The Mission found, however, that in one or two of the larger states, such as Bombay, there was not only adaptation of the programme to the needs of the State, but a recognition of the fact that the programme had to be adapted to the needs of each of the different regions of the State.

65. The Mission recognized that the community development programme in India, though of recent origin, has been integrated into the administrative system of the country. It found that care was taken not to create a separate administrative machinery or hierarchy, and that therefore the line of authority and supervision was that of the general administration. From the State governments, the lines of communication and authority go to division commissioners (where applicable) and then to the district collector or magistrate, who is responsible for community development programme implementation at the district level.

66. The collector functions as the co-ordinating officer and the captain of a team consisting of technical officers of the respective development departments. The Mission met a number of the collectors who had been given responsibility for this new and urgent rural programme in addition to their other duties. They were able to explain to the Mission why the community development programme had caught on in some areas, and why it was slow in making headway in others.

67. The block unit, originally set up to facilitate the earlier community development projects, has now become part of the administrative machinery, though it has no strictly administrative functions outside the field of community development.

68. The Mission visited a large number of block headquarters, some temporarily housed in rented buildings, others forming a little group of offices and staff quarters, sometimes including a primary health centre. In more than one State, local villagers expressed their pleasure at going to block headquarters in contrast to their former apprehension at going to district headquarters.

69. The block development officer is the head of a team consisting of extension officers in different fields whose work will be discussed later. He has a particularly difficult task, since he is responsible administratively for co-ordinating the team, but technically members of his team are under the direction of the departmental officers at the district level.

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10 For a more detailed discussion of this point, see Chapter IV below.

70. Most aspects of the block development officer's work, including his recruitment and training, are dealt with in the rest of this report. He is a new kind of official in the Indian services, with a totally new kind of job. The Mission was aware that patience and time were needed in helping the majority of block development officers to understand and to carry out their work as required.

C. Finance

71. The extent of financing the community development programme in India, a country where monetary resources are limited, illustrates the vast scope of the programme. Under the first Five-Year Plan, approximately 900 million rupees were earmarked for community development programme, but only 520 million rupees were reported as having been spent. In the second Five-Year Plan, 2,000 million rupees were earmarked. Some 25 per cent of the funds are spent on staff salaries. This expenditure, however, cannot be considered as an overhead administrative charge, because most of the staff is not involved in administration, but engaged in service programmes of assistance and guidance to rural people.

72. The funds needed for community development programmes are channelled through the schematic budgets of the development blocks, through schemes in the Five-Year Plan of the different development departments and through grants-in-aid given to local authorities and non-official agencies. The schematic budget of the block is treated only as funds for financing the programme of the block, the intention being that the resources of the development departments given to them through the Five-Year Plans should also be pooled at the block level and then properly utilized for a co-ordinated programme of development for the block area. Some progress has been made in the achievement of this objective, but a great deal yet remains to be done. From the block level, funds are, as far as possible, to be channelled further down through panchayats and other village institutions.

73. A considerable portion of the money earmarked for community development represents grants from the Centre, to the States and, in turn, from State governments to blocks and villages. The Mission was sometimes not sure that the expenditure on community development programmes was always applied to stimulate the greatest possible local self-effort—such questions as the lack of land improvement compared with the provisions of such facilities as paved lanes, panchayat buildings, community centres and so on are discussed elsewhere in this report. Very often the grant-in-aid policy weighs so heavily on the whole programme that the fulfilment of targets by block development officers and other staff is measured by the amount of money spent.

D. Phasing of the further expansion of the community development programme.

74. The Mission has considered carefully whether the present phasing of the expansion of the community development programme is justified and has weighed all the pros and cons which are currently under discussion in India in connexion with this vital question. Undoubtedly, the Government has made known its intention that the minimum of services to rural people, as envisaged in the community development programme, must be provided as soon as possible for the entire country. The only limitations are imposed by the availability of funds and, even more, of trained perosnnel.

75. Following upon the recommendations of the Mehta Report, the National Development Council accepted some slowing down of the programme's expansion. While the original date set for attaining country-wide coverage of National Extension Service Blocks by the end of the second Five Year Plan (1961), the new phasing of the programme, as approved in May 1958, will proceed as follows:

Date	*No. of blocks* *	
April 1958	200	
October 1958	..	
April 1959	150	
October 1959	150	
April 1960	200	
October 1960	200	
April 1961	250	Third Five Year Plan
October 1961	250	Third Five Year Plan
April 1962	300	Third Five Year Plan
October 1962	300	Third Five Year Plan
April 1963	400	Third Five Year Plan
October 1963	400	Third Five Year Plan
Total	2,800	
No. of blocks allotted to date	2,154	
Grand Total	4,954 or 5,000 (rounded)	

76. Allocation of new blocks in 1959 is estimated at 300. Whether this tempo can be increased materially up to the 800 blocks per year in 1963 is open to question. The Mission was aware of the fact that, due to the fast rate of expansion, approximately 25 per cent of posts in the existing blocks are vacant [11], and that the blocks are currently on the average 25 per cent larger than the minimum norms prescribed. To bring the blocks up to the minimum standard, both funds and personnel should be proportionately increased.

77. Furthermore, it seems advisable in the present condition of the programme, to weed out inefficient and undesirable personnel which, in some states is estimated at as much as 25 per cent of the total, and also to strengthen supervision and provide better in-service training. In addition, greater attention should be paid to the increase in agricultural production in view of the food crisis which threatens to endanger the whole fabric of Indian life and the very foundation of the five-year plans. To remedy this situation in approximately 2,000 existing blocks would take even more effort than to establish 300 new blocks every year. The Government of India may, therefore, consider whether for several years to come the expansion should proceed at the rate accepted for 1959 (300 blocks) or whether the additional efforts should rather be concentrated on consolidating the existing blocks.

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* A block consists of approximately 100 villages with a population of 66,000.

11 Planning Commission, Fifth Evaluation Report, pp. 149 *ff.*, Conclusion No. 2.

78. While the Mission is in full sympathy with the political and social arguments in favour of fast extension of coverage, the concept of an automatic extension to further areas may be challenged on many grounds and, in fact, was seriously questioned by the leaders of India themselves. Prime Minister Nehru, presiding over the Central Committee on Community Development in December 1958, reportedly said "......that some simple norms should be laid down for testing the people's preparedness to do things by themselves". He felt that the Community Development Programme should not be extended to any new areas unless people in that region demonstrated their spirit of self-help by undertaking elementary schemes of community benefit as, for example, keeping the village clean. "In the existing blocks, additional financial allocations should be contingent", the Prime Minister observed, "on the people's initiative and capacity for discharging their own responsibilities".

79. This idea of testing people's readiness for self-help may well be tried in the establishment of pre-extension blocks suggested in the Mehta Report and approved in the revised programme of 1958. The Mission suggests that the term "preparatory block" may fit the concept better.[12] Furthermore, work in such preparatory blocks might, if funds permitted, be carried out not only for one year, but longer, until a full allocation for a normal community development block became possible. The emphasis would, of course, be on extension in agriculture and the staff might, from the outset, base its work on close co-operation with voluntary leaders and village institutions.

80. One illustration may serve to support this argument. The Mission found that, in areas of the Damodar Valley Corporation and in the areas where irrigation facilities are available as a result of the construction of the Hirakud Dam, the shift from single to double cropping has been very slow and farmers were not using facilities which were created at enormous national expense and which should lead to an immediate increase in the yield of food grain. This failure was probably due to the lack of educational preparation of the farmers for the technological changes brought by irrigation.

81. The Mission would, in general, agree with the opinion frequently voiced in India that the community development programme should be applied in a uniform and just manner to all areas, and should not further accentuate the already existing economic differences between the richer and poorer areas of India. This opinion, nevertheless, concedes that the Government must, for several years to come, concentrate its efforts on increasing food production and, therefore, on a greater concentration of staff and funds in areas where—for instance—irrigation facilities have been provided or where new land has been reclaimed. The Mission believes this view to be justified. In such areas, the number of village-level workers should be doubled or even trebled and the force of general agricultural extension specialists strengthened by additional crop and irrigation experts. Such a task force might be moved after one or two years from one area of a state to another wherever economic or agricultural conditions warrant such an intensive programme; or it might gradually be absorbed into the normal staffing pattern of newly created blocks after the emergency had passed.

[12] The main activity in the current "pre-extension blocks" is supposed to be agricultural extension.

82. The rate at which this expansion takes place will be crucial to the ultimate success of the programme. A rate of expansion that is unrealistic and too fast can only multiply existing difficulties and create illusory coverage achievements. Expansion in the form of the provision of poorly selected and inadequately trained staff for an unduly large number of villages, or of numerically inadequate staffing may greatly endanger the very foundation of the programme.

83. Even the moderate rate of expansion of 300 blocks per year, if combined with the efforts to organize preparatory blocks in sufficient numbers to improve the staffing of the existing blocks, and the organization of food emergency task forces would require much greater funds than are at present allotted to the community development programme.

Chapter IV

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA'S RESOURCES

84. The discussion in the present chapter will be concerned with some of the questions raised in Chapter II above, particularly with the key question whether India's agricultural production can grow at a rate sufficient to improve the country's diet and to sustain general economic development at a rate permitting adequate savings for capital formation. In this context, the focus of the discussion will be on India's resources: land, water, manpower and scientific knowledge.

85. The Mission was not in a position to make adequate investigations into population growth rates, or to carry out comparative studies of crop yields, or to ascertain whether in most community development blocks there had been any very considerable increase in production as a result of the community development programmes. Similarly, it was unable to draw up a comprehensive agricultural plan or to give a complete coverage of agricultural problems.

86. In some states, however, the Mission found a general belief that community development was responsible for a significant production increase attributable to coverage by the programme. The criteria cited in support of this belief included increased food consumption in the villages, increased sales of fertilizer and seeds, and demand for greater irrigation facilities. In the time available, the Mission was unable to make a systematic comparison between community development blocks and non-project areas; however, a detailed field study on the relationship between community development and economic development is being made in a limited area by the Planning, Research and Action Institute of Uttar Pradesh on behalf of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE).

87. This chapter draws attention to some of the salient features of the relationships between land, people, labour and production and suggests some directions in which a fuller use might be made of existing resources. Most of the material in this chapter was gathered in brief but intensive studies of village agriculture.

88. While many of the following suggestions refer to activities in the fields of agriculture and the use of land resources, the importance of these fields for the community development programme is obvious. The entire programme of agricultural extension at the village and block level is carried out in India by the community development workers. Furthermore, the community development multipurpose programme has its fullest expression in the comprehensive village development planning wherein agriculture plays its dominant role. Finally, most of the Mission suggestions refer to use of unskilled labour which is abundant in villages and which can contribute to the economic development of India through intensification of agriculture, soil conservation, minor irrigation, afforestation, etc. In all these labour-intensive activities community

development workers must play a key role as stimulators, advisers and organizers of people in local communities.

Agricultural development requirements in the present situation

89. The annual rate of growth of the Indian population is already close to 2 per cent per annum (the National Sample Survey estimated it at 1·9 per cent in rural areas) and seems likely in the near future to approach 2·5 per cent.[13] The current opinion among economists specializing in development is that an adequate rate of economic progress would necessitate an increase in agricultural production at least 2 per cent greater than the increase in population.

90. This would help to prevent the occurrence of famine, reduce food imports, raise nutritional standards which are far too low, both quantitatively and qualitatively; it would also increase supplies of agricultural raw materials to the processing industries and for export, thus earning foreign currency for imports of necessary farm equipment and machinery, and for general industrial development.

91. The rate of increase in agricultural production under the first five-year Plan which was estimated at between 2 and 2·5 per cent per annum, was said by the Planning Commission in 1958 to be insufficient to support a large-scale plan of economic development.[14] Even this estimate of a 2 to 2·5 per cent increase gave an over-optimistic impression, since the rains were more favourable towards the end of the first Five-Year Plan. Furthermore, agricultural output had been distinctly underestimated until 1953. During the past ten years, the continuous import of cereals has reached an annual average of 2·5 million tons. Since July 1955, grain quotations for India were always above world prices, and sometimes—for instance, at the beginning of February 1959, when a kilogramme of wheat in Bhopal cost 1 rupee—well above the world level. This fact merely underlined conditions of near-famine in some parts of the country.

92. The original target under the second Five-Year Plan was a 15 per cent increase in food grains over the five-year period, and the figure was later raised to 23·8 per cent, or 80·5 million tons by 1961. The present production trend, unfortunately, makes it appear doubtful whether this target will be reached. If the 110 million tons are to be produced by the end of the third Five-Year Plan, a far greater effort than has been made heretofore seems to be indispensable.[15]

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[13] According to estimates contained in the *Report on India's Food Crisis and Steps to Meet it*, by the Agricultural Production Team sponsored by the Ford Foundation (Government of India, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, April 1959), India's population will increase by 50 million during the period of the third Five-Year Plan.

[14] Government of India, Planning Commission, *Appraisal and Prospects of the Second Five-Year Plan*, May 1958.

[15] This appraisal, made in February 1959, was subsequently confirmed by the above-cited report of the Ford Foundation (see footnote 13 above), published in April 1959.

93. For the existing labour, financial and technological resources there is keen competition between agricultural improvement, emphasized by the first Five-Year Plan, and industrialization. Both appear equally necessary and are related to other pre-requisites of development, namely better health and more facilities for education of a kind which will be adapted both to the needs of the modern world and to those of the peasants of the Deccan or the Indus and Ganges plains.

94. A possible compromise would be that industry should be allotted a considerable proportion of the money investment, and especially the foreign exchange, on condition that it devoted adequate resources to producing necessities for agriculture. What Indian soils need most, apart from organic substances, is nitrogen. One new nitrogen production plant every year, or an annual increase of 200,000 tons of pure nitrogen may seem to be an ambitious programme; it nevertheless constitutes, in the Mission's view, an indispensable basis for a level of agricultural production which will meet the needs of population growth and leave a substantial surplus. Next comes the problem of phosphate and potash fertilizers, insecticides and cryptogam exterminators, and, in due course, hormone weed killers, etc. Once this has been achieved, agriculture will be in the fortunate position of being able to manage largely on labour invested in land improvement and with the help of a wide dissemination of technical knowledge, without any great need for foreign exchange.

95. Agricultural progress in India is currently faced with certain special difficulties. The first of these is the result of prolonged periods of uncontrolled cultivation. This has led to soil exhaustion through loss of humus and fertilizing elements, without any satisfactory replacement, thus encouraging erosion. The second is inherent in the traditional land tenure system, which has favoured the development of a class of land owners who spend little or none of their rents on land improvements. This is in part related to the caste system, under which the lower castes are generally not in a position to purchase land and to grow commercial crops. Other difficulties are the persistence of money-lending and share-cropping, and fragmentation, all of which constitute major long-range obstacles to agricultural progress. Historically, the increasing pressure of population in India has led to the extension of cultivation to marginal and even submarginal lands, with the result that the country has now extremely low per acre yields of food and fibre crops; however, offers India an advantage in the sense that it is far easier to raise the crop yield from its existing low level, through introduction of relatively simple but improved techniques.

96. The community development programme represents an effort of unprecedented magnitude to establish a progressive system of agriculture in a land of impoverished soil, and a more democratic social structure in a hierarchical (caste) society. It was inevitable that this effort should encounter many obstacles and serious difficulties. These will be analysed below and, in the light of this analysis, a number of measures for improving the efficacy of this national effort will be suggested.

A. Investment for Land Improvement

97. The answer to the problem of under-development is, in all circumstances, an accelerated rate of investment. The volume of available investment is limited at the outset by the rate of capital formation and, particularly, the rate of productive use of private savings, which

is often too low in countries such as India, where there is a preference for investment in land, buildings, much more tangible assets than gold and jewellery. This has made it necessary to supplement private with public investment, but the volume of the latter is also limited by the possibilities of taxation and by the amount of foreign aid obtainable.

98. This situation makes it desirable, in the first place, to earmark the greatest possible proportion of public funds for directly productive investment, but without curtailing the funds required for the rapid improvement of education and health. In the community development programme, the provision of some village amenities, such as the paving of streets and the construction of panchayat buildings might be delayed, and the money and labour diverted to more productive operations.

99. The next requirement is to increase the available resources for investment. The question was raised of whether the measures appropriate to this purpose might include some increase in land taxes (land revenue assessment), at least in regions where the crop is regular or where there are means of irrigation which are not used to full capacity. Five per cent of the average gross harvest does not seem an excessive figure in such circumstances; yet a total tax of only 2 per cent of the gross product was found to apply to double-crop rice-fields south of Madura, or in delta areas including both the land revenue assessment and irrigation charges, whereas the rate at times seemed distinctly high in semi-arid regions such as near Poona where the crop is irregular, and the tax (7 per cent) is levied even when the harvest has been poor.

100. For example, one village visited in Punjab had sunk too many drinking-water wells (for caste reasons), and every well had too wide a lip, so that large quantities of cement had been wasted. Yet there is a shortage of cement for making irrigation canals watertight. Larger areas could be irrigated from the same storage basin by stopping the leaks in the canal banks through which water percolates on to low-lying ground which, being flooded, cannot be cultivated.

101. A brick-and-tile school had been built in the village with neither chairs nor desks. A mud thatch building, completely open on the shady side, with rustic desks, would have been more satisfactory and would have cost much less; the community building itself represented a premature expenditure of funds, because the school building could have been used for meetings.

102. The school was equipped with parallel bars for gymnastic exercises, and a children's slide, all made of steel, but in the fields the preparation of seedbeds was not properly done because of a shortage of agricultural implements, for the production of which inadequate quotas of iron had been allotted. Steel is a metal too precious to be wasted in this way, when it can perfectly well be replaced for such purposes by local materials like wood or bamboo. Only very highly developed countries can afford such a luxury.

103. The village streets had been paved with bricks, which was a convenience during the three or four months of monsoon, but some of the fields had suffered considerably from excess water due to a complete lack of any kind of drainage system. Consequently, the cotton crop (to mention only one) had been negligible, due also in part to the fact that ridge cultivation, which protects the roots from the excess of water,

is practically confined to sugar-cane. With the same clay, the same labour and the same fuel it would have been possible to make drain pipes and lay them end-to-end in trenches. By removing the excess of water, this would immediately have resulted in a substantial increase of harvest and would also have made certain that all the other agricultural improvements would have paid—which they can hardly do at present so long as there is too much water.

104. In this village, as in many other areas of the Indus-Ganges plain as far as Uttar Pradesh and the "old delta" of Bengal, lack of drainage was the principal obstacle to agricultural progress. Remedial action ought therefore to have been accorded top priority.

105. Investments made so far under community development schemes have tended more in the direction of means of communications, such as roads, and village amenities, such as wells and schools, rather than in the direction of agricultural improvement. It would appear that the impetus for the provision of such amenities has frequently come from the block authorities. In any event, any substantial investment of public funds for these purposes would appear to be undesirable. There is also the widely-shared impression that *shramdan* (voluntary labour) was seldom applied to agricultural improvement and that even with respect to community facilities, *shramdan* has lost its initial drive and enthusiasm and is declining markedly. The number of days' work contributed in the first years of the programme rarely exceeded two or three days per adult person per year. Not all classes participated in *shramdan,* and the well-to-do groups (high castes) seldom contributed their share. Even this very low rate of work is not kept up and now seldom exceeds one day a year.[16]

106. The main task from now on is to make a valiant effort with regard to the soil itself, in order to protect it from destruction and to increase its productive capacity. A series of measures must be taken, such as speedy completion of land reform and public works programmes centred on soil improvements of all kinds (see also section P below, on labour investment). The delay of land reform not only produces many other ill-effects, but, first of all, discourages investment in private land because future ownership of land is left in doubt. Some well-designed provisions of land reform might well encourage such private investment, as in Italy, by raising the upper limit of land holdings in the case of landowners who have already invested in improvements of their holdings. Furthermore, many legal systems provide that, where large-scale public investments have enhanced the value of property, the authorities may require the landowners to make certain payments for the appreciation in the value of his property. In such circumstances, it would be feasible to require landowners also to carry out such additional improvements as might be necessary if the fullest use was to be made of large-scale (mainly irrigation) projects.

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[16] One member of the Mission had studied agriculture in mainland China in the autumn of 1955. He had noticed that in almost every village visited or passed, there was at least one team working on land improvement, such as flood control, irrigation, drainage, soil conservation and afforestation. While a certain amount of compulsion was undoubtedly used, many teams worked with enthusiasm and zeal. In a substantial proportion of the villages visited in India, the Mission learned that *shramdan* projects had not been undertaken for as long as two to three years. (See Rene Dumont, *Revolution dans les campagnes chinoises*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1957).

B. Minor Irrigation

107. Minor irrigation systems were the essential factor in the extremely rapid progress made recently by Chinese agriculture even before alluvial deposits and other available sources of natural fertilizers were used on a larger scale. The use of such systems has at least four main advantages over large-scale operations: (1) the cost per unit of surface area is, as a rule, lower, often very much lower; (2) they can be installed with no greater outlay than the use of "concealed productive forces", *i.e.,* labour otherwise idle; (3) with next to no expenditure of public funds—amounting in many cases, to no more than the mere cost of technical supervision; and (4) since the benefiting peasants feel themselves to be the "owners" of the installations, they are far more willing than they would otherwise be to carry out the necessary maintenance work.

108. Despite urgent appeals by the Governments of India and of the states, past and present performance on those lines through community development programmes has been affected by factors mentioned below. In many blocks, achievement amounts to no more than 30 to 40 per cent of the original targets, and in some areas, nothing at all has been achieved, even where it would have been of the utmost value. In the course of a visit to one block in the eastern part of India, it was found that none of the grant of 200,000 rupees allocated for minor irrigation had been spent. Yet this is a district with only 4 per cent of crops other than paddy, and still less of double-crops, in spite of the existence of many tanks, all more or less choked up with mud, and recent large-scale irrigation works which have been carried out in the area.

109. A number of India's old tanks (large dug-out ponds for water storage) in places visited by us seem to need cleaning. The silt or alluvium is often of great value as a fertilizer, especially in areas where there has been a certain amount of erosion. Otherwise, or until such time as the tanks can be cleared, subsistence crops, such as sorghum or members of the gourd family, can be grown, when the waters retreat, in the shallow areas. Other possibilities are the planting of trees, fish breeding, the cultivation of floating rice (if the water rises gradually), etc. It occurred to the Mission that some of the tanks might be made much deeper, which would increase their water-storage capacity, while reducing their surface area and hence the rate of evaporation. The shallowest part could then be filled in and cultivated, after first being put into a healthy condition by good drainage. In some detailed investigations this reportedly was found to be an uneconomic proposition, but the problem may be worth further study in areas where cultivable land is desparately needed and labour is available.

110. In some parts of India the problem of utilizing tanks is of considerable importance, as the following example may indicate. One village visited south of Mysore state was very over-populated; there were practically no chances of employment for the landless despite the intense cultivation rendered possible by irrigation throughout most of the year. Irrigation was formerly from tanks, but the tanks have been disused since the cannals were built. In these old tanks, covering 128 acres (51 hectares) lies the best soil—carried down from the hillsides by erosion, rich in marl, alluvium and humus. At one time the rich alluvium was regularly carried to the dry crops, but this wise practice has now been abandoned, and the block advisers do not seem to have made sufficient effort to secure its resumption.

111. The ownership of the tanks is in dispute between two neighbouring villages and, in addition, the various ministries cannot agree as to whether the tanks should be used at all, since the Ministry of Health forbids flooding or irrigation nearer than 2 furlongs (400 metres) from a village. The result is that, since 1931, this rich soil produces nothing but some very meagre grazing, with a few reeds (Typha) in the lowest-lying marshy areas. An essential function of the blocks should be to clear administrative obstacles out of the way, and an intelligent and active block development officer would have tackled the tanks problem, for this example is far from an isolated case and is of primary importance for the whole area. This village can serve as an example of how administrative shortcomings may allow good soil to lie idle for decades and population remain under-employed and underfed. Several things could be done straight away, starting with the cartage of the alluvium back to the fields. If there is not enough animal transport available, a lorry hired out to farmers on a "no loss, no profit" basis would be a most profitable investment. Furthermore, some tanks, after cleaning out, could be filled with water again, so that three harvests could be gathered every year, water being supplied from the tanks during the periods when the irrigation canals are not working. Lastly, the soil from the tanks could be cultivated on the spot, whether irrigated or not, and that would require less labour.

112. Some officials argue that the tanks should be left in their present condition because the pasturage is needed. They still do not understand that the daily increasing pressure of population rules out pastoral methods of cattle-feeding which are suitable only in sparsely-populated countries. One-tenth of the area of the tank, under fodder-crops, would yield as much cattle food as the whole of the present pasturage, and thereby release 90 per cent of the soil for growing food, vegetables, sugar cane, paddy and other cereals.

113. The ownership of the tank could either remain with the State or be transferred to some local body, but not until it was properly organized and rid of its caste prejudices. The land would then be let for cultivation on long-term leases at moderate rents, on condition that a specified proportion was reserved for fodder growing. This would afford an excellent opportunity to introduce this new technique, which the peasants find so hard to accept.

114. The reclaiming of these tanks might also make it easier to find a solution for the social problem. If they were let at a moderate rent this would force down the present excessive level of rents. If the tanks were assigned to the landless inhabitants of villages, this would be a means of providing them with land without harming anyone.

115. The Government of India is fostering "co-operative farming", which may prove difficult to achieve in the case of land already in individual ownership. Here, however, was a chance of carrying out a concrete experiment by assigning all tanks to the landless inhabitants of the villages, on condition that they work them collectively.

116. Minor irrigation schemes under the community development programme which are of direct benefit to the landowners concerned should, as a rule, be carried out, or, as is more frequently the case, paid for, by each landowner in proportion to the area served, on a land basis

and not on a household basis. Non-land-owning peasants should not be expected to co-operate in cleaning out the tank without direct benefit to themselves; this would constitute a sort of extension of the former *begar* system, or work compulsorily performed without reward and for the benefit of the landowners, a system which has, fortunately, been abolished by a law which is being genuinely enforced.

117. Progress with regard to wells or river-pumping in the community development project areas seems to have been very much more considerable. The Persian wheel is more efficient than the water-skin. Where a well is too deep for the Persian wheel to be used, and electric current is not yet available, a bullock-driven piston-pump, such as that produced at the industrial centre of Baruipur (West Bengal) seems to be well worth bringing into general use, provided that an expert could improve its capacity, which seems rather low. An alternative model for shallower pumping (1 to 6 metres) which could raise water on the slope from a pond or tank at a lower level would also be useful.

C. Full utilization of Major Irrigation systems (double cropping)

118. The question of the utilization of major irrigation systems was studied mainly in West Bengal. In the two instances surveyed, the economic results achieved by erecting dams do not appear to be sufficient to justify the heavy expenditure involved. At present, the reservoirs do no more than furnish a kind of insurance policy for the cultivation of *Aman* or rainy-season paddy in the event of delay or scarcity in the monsoon rainfall, which in this area does not seem to occur more than once every three or four years.

119. The large-scale projects have all been carried out with the aid of public funds. The local population concerned had apparently not been consulted and quite often had not even been engaged to work on the projects. The local people complained that the bridges crossing the canals or ditches are built in the wrong places, being spaced out at too regular intervals. They also complained that the built-up canals hinder the satisfactory run-off of drainage water. The need for regulation of these irrigation systems was increased by the fact that water was drawn off freely and constantly during the irrigation season through intake pipes incorporated into the channels. The result was that too much water accumulated in low-lying areas. Water that is wasted in this way is no longer available for use during the next dry season, though it would then be far more productive. In some regions, there did not appear to be any attempt by the local population to plan a network of irrigation channels which would reach the small individual holdings, nor to plan a general drainage system, for which no provision had been made.

120. To induce growers to do this, they should be made to pay for the water by volume, reckoned per hour of use of each draw-off point, and not by surface area irrigated, as at present. An irrigation co-operative, working on the basis of the area served by each water draw-off point, could then check the distribution of the water within that area and require each user to pay for exactly the number of hours during which he had drawn off water. In this way each peasant would have a real personal interest in saving water (which he certainly does not have at present); in addition, the rice field banks might be made higher (for

instance, by 12 inches), so as to retain on the ground a larger proportion of the water collected during heavy rainfalls.

121. In anticipation of heavy rains, the farmer would normally maintain only a shallow layer of water over his rice field. The water so saved, instead of being wasted or even doing positive harm through leaching of the soil, could be used for irrigation purposes during the dry season, when it would yield the best return.

122. A dam cannot pay its way unless double cropping is widely resorted to in the area it serves, or unless an unduly high proportion of its cost is incorporated in the charge made for electric power. The amount of double cropping of rice and other grains in West Bengal is apparently not more than 14 per cent. In somewhat similar climatic and demographic conditions, North Viet-Nam has almost two thirds of its area under dual cultivation, and the proportion is even higher in Kwantong (Canton), China. To ensure the maintenance of the soil's fertility in the newly irrigated areas, "it would be desirable if the cultivation of a specified proportion of fodder crop could be made a condition in the lease".[17]

D. Drainage

123. In the Indus and Ganges plains, and in many of the coastal plains, irrigation not accompanied by satisfactory drainage has increased the areas of *usars* or salt-laden soils, and with the recent extension of sprinkling, this threatens to assume the proportions of a national catastrophe. Every new irrigation system should embody a drainage network, which need not be very elaborate if the system for saving water and collecting rainwater by means of small dykes constructed in the rice fields is applied more generally.

124. Drainage is essential, even where there is no irrigation, wherever the contour of the terrain does not permit a satisfactory run-off. Many flat plains or humid valleys cannot yield good harvests because there is no drainage and the water remains on the surface too long. In the first village visited by the Mission in the Punjab, near Nilokheri, it was observed that there was no drainage in the fields; yet the absence of drainage was the main obstacle—in fact, the bottleneck—of agricultural development in that area.

125. Pending the establishment of this drainage network—and even after its installation—an improvement essential to Indian agriculture which might be undertaken by the community development programme would be the wide-spread adoption of surface drainage through balk cultivation. The balks or ridges should, preferably, be arranged parallel to the contour lines, especially on pronounced slopes, and perpendicular to the contour lines on extremely flat ground. In planning community development agricultural programmes, it should be noted that over large kharif crop areas, an excess of water reduces and sometimes wipes out the crop nearly every year. Cotton, sorghum and millet are the crops most severely affected. The trenches separating the ridges, which are 70 to 80 centimetres apart and 20 to 25 centimetres high for cotton and sorghum, can be dammed here and there to ensure better retention of

[17] R. O. Whyte, *The Grassland and Fodder Resources of India*, I.C.A.R., 1957.

the subsoil water; this is an economical method of carrying out "micro-conservation" both of water and of soil.

126. There is an exaggerated fear that drainage will accentuate the drying out of the soil in the dry season. This can be counteracted by temporary dams which can easily be set up on all the drainage channels.

E. Soil Conservation

127. Conservation of the soil to combat erosion caused by water and wind is another means of increasing infiltration, retention and conservation of water for the crops.

128. Since soil conservation is one of the major agricultural operations safeguarding the country's principal heritage—the land—and determining its entire future, it can no longer be left to the whim of the landowner. The owner of the land must first of all be convinced of the need for such a measure by the establishment of a soil-conservation demonstration plot in the area of each *gram sevak* (village level worker) at the block's expense. It must be so designed as to show what soil conservation really is, namely an agricultural operation as necessary and remunerative (though over a long period) as tilling, always provided that the amount of earth-moving is kept as low as is compatible with efficiency. Observation suggests, however, that contour bunding in long straight lines, following the boundaries of the fields, as at present widely practised in much of India, especially in Rajasthan and Bombay, is a poor compromise. A counter-slope terrace parallel to the contour lines would often involve moving only half or one-third of the volume of earth (thus reducing the cost accordingly), and would be far more effective in that it would promote uniform water infiltration, and its own surface could be cultivated. In digging operations, the topsoil should be put aside and replaced after the earth has been removed. The economic value of the bench terraces is increased if drought-resistant fruit trees, fodder-bearing trees or other fodder plants (*e.g.*, spineless cactus) and manure crop trees of the *Ipomea* type, or even trees yielding firewood, are planted along them.

129. Bench terrassing could be encouraged, either by a five-year tax rebate or by a small subsidy accompanied by more generous loans, as is already the practice in Bombay. Later, each owner might be required to carry out this work gradually over a specified period of years in all the areas declared to be "danger zones", only the poorest owners being helped by loans or, very occasionally, by grants. The extent of these facilities should vary according to the situation; they should be substantial only in cases where the work carried out would protect publicly-owned equipment (roads, railways, dams or irrigation systems) or in semi-arid sub-marginal or distressed zones, where the yield is poor, *e.g.*, the region immediately to the east of the Western Ghats.

130. It should be recalled that, at Etawah, soil conservation was carried out as an important community development project by the peasants themselves, payment being made merely for part of the cement used in building the water draw-off structures.

131. In any case, to adopt any one system for India, where conditions of climate, soil and gradient vary so tremendously, would be very wide of the mark.

F. Land development in the villages and the Consolidation of holdings

132. The none too efficient compromise technique adopted for soil conservation is partly explained by the social and psychological problems inherent in the consolidation of holdings. Such consolidation would be very usefull anywhere, but it is indispensable in areas where land improvement is being carried out, in order to ensure proper land use. The cost of the complete network for bringing water to the fields by means of irrigation channels will be considerably lowered once consolidation has reduced the number of holdings, and the same is true of drainage. Consolidation however, carried out without consideration of land use, can greatly hamper later soil conservation and drainage operations. In many parts of India it will, however, be impossible to guarantee a minimum economical holding until the pressure of population and livestock on the land has greatly diminshed.

133. In order to avoid leaving gaps, or overlapping, and to find the most economical system, an attempt must thus be made to study simultaneously the problem of all the possible improvements for each piece of land. These should be carried out in accordance with an over-all development plan for each village, with primary consideration being given to consolidation and the whole system of land improvement, to be implemented in accordance with an order of priority established in conjunction with the village plan. Thus, the land required for general projects (canals, drains, bench terraces for soil conservation, etc.) would be set aside, and the boundaries of new plots of land would be fitted logically into the general pattern of the projects (channels, distributories, bench terraces), following their main outlines. At the same time, the most fertile land would, as far as possible, be kept for agricultural purposes and its allotment for general purposes avoided.

G. Afforestation to save manure

134. An increase in the humus content of the soil and in organic matter, together with water control and preservation of the topsoil, is, for India, an essential means of making the best use of rainwater and fertilizers.

135. China's traditional lead over India in output (more than double—and at present nearly three times—the yield per acre in the case of paddy) is primarily due to the fact that the narrow Chinese plains became over-populated earlier than the land of India, so that for thousands of years, the Chinese have been forced to practise continuous intensive cultivation, using organic fertilizers from every conceivable source: animal and human excreta, which they handle without repugnance; household and urban refuse; leaves and other vegetable compost; mud from ponds and ditches, etc.

136. The Indian peasants waste a great deal of human excreta around their houses and villages, often on uncultivated land; they generally make no use of the urine and burn most of the cattle dung. The Mission noted that, under the community development programme, experimental projects are carried on to save urine and human excreta from communal latrines for agricultural use. To a large extent, the efforts of the community development schemes to increase the production of green manure have been definitely successful, but the efforts in regard to natural manures and composts have been hampered not only by the

peasants' resistance to innovations, but also by the shortage and high cost of fuel. It was found that dried cow dung is frequently sold as fuel at four times the price it fetches as fertilizer. Some green manures also produce woody stems which can be used as fuel. The reforestation of all waste land, at the sides of roads and banks of canals, with quick-growing species, such as eucalypus and beefwood, offers quite promising prospects almost everywhere. The efforts being made in this direction through the community development programme are, however, quite inadequate. The communal and the state-owned land on the banks of rivers and along roads could be utilized for this purpose through the action of the panchayats. Proper managements of the existing forests, and particularly the protection of the forests against stray goats, is another necessary step. While the management of forests has little relation to the community development programme except in tribal areas in the hills, the protection of forests, particularly newly afforested areas, from stray goats and cattle may constitute a legitimate community development project.

H. The fodder problem and animal husbandry

137. Goats appear to be universally destructive in Indian villages. However, the milch goat with a high milk yield fed by the household or tethered within reach of forage crops would seem well worth encouraging, since it could furnish milk for the children of Harijans, who can hardly afford to keep a cow or a buffalo. As goat and mutton constitute the major part of the meat consumed, programmes for the improvement of the meat producing capacity of sheep and goats should be initiated wherever feeding facilities are available. If no straw is available because it is used up for forage and roofing, the silt from the tanks or ditches makes an excellent litter, which will be all the better for its use by the goats and cattle, and hence more worth while transporting.

138. In many instances, waste land available for reforestation is at present being used as rough grazing and as livestock pasture. As pasturage, the land is poor, overgrazed and half-exhausted; nevertheless something must be found to replace it. In a village or block community development plan, half the waste land might be reforested, and the other half, if given over to fodder crops, would yield far more cattle feed than the old pasturage. The pastoral grazing system, based on the spontaneous growth of grass, has gone on far too long in this over-populated country. A real improvement could be obtained by the introduction of controlled grazing, but fodder crops should be a key feature of India's agricultural development and, as such, encouraged in all planning.[18] The results obtained in this respect in Punjab, Western Uttar Pradesh and north of Bombay are very promising. But the return on them must be improved by a determined effort to get rid of useless cattle through exporting or sterilizing them.

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[18] Sir John Russell observed (1937) that "a wide introduction of fodder crops into Indian agriculture would probably effect a great improvement.. in British agriculture, the additional yields of grain more than compensated for the area taken from grain and put under fodder crops." See R. O. Whyte, *op. cit.*

139. Village children, except in the richer families, today drink practically no milk. In the majority of villages visited, milk consumption was far less than formerly, since the milk available per head of population has dropped since 1900 by perhaps one-third, and the sale of milk in the towns has, at the same time, greatly increased. Hence it is essential to have better fed and better selected cattle so as to increase with the utmost speed the production of milk, since it is an important item of diet. It is surely anomalous to distribute imported powdered milk in a country which has 22:5 per cent of the world's supply of bovine and bubaline livestock, although useless cattle often constitute one-third of the total. As at Anand College in Bombay, cow's milk should be regarded as the most important type since India possesses some of the best tropical milch-cow species (Sahiwal, Red Sindhi, Kandrej, etc.). Buffalo milk which is more widely used is much richer in butter fats, but vegetable fats are more economical to produce. It has been demonstrated at Anand College that it was better to raise a single strain of cattle—the males to be used as draught animals and the females as milk producers—than to use only male cattle and milch buffaloes, which leads to the breeding of animals that are of little or no use (male buffalo calves which die of starvation).

140. In addition to increasing the nation's milk supply, a large quantity of fodder distributed among a smaller but better fed draught animal population would increase the amount of animal power available. This raises the problem of utilization in common, by neighbouring operators, of stronger teams of one or two pairs of animals, with a view to a better tending of the soil and preparation of the seed bed with the help of improved implements.[19] It should also enable manpower to be replaced by the animal-driven mills for husking and polishing grain, craftsman appliances and threshing, winnowing and water-raising machinery.

141. The intermediate forms of agricultural development using animal power with improved implements, still practised in some places in Europe, might be of interest to India, which does not have the capital to adopt the latest machinery immediately and everywhere. This fact is generally recognized with regard to village industry, but it does not appear to have always been given sufficient attention in the specifically agricultural sphere in community development training schemes.

142. In this connexion, special attention must be given to the improvement of implements using animal traction (for ploughing, milling, haulage, etc.). or hand-operated implements, however simple. The spread of irrigation and double cropping demands an animal-driven furrow hoe. If a production and development division could be added to each agricultural college or training centre, it would help to produce the most suitable form of these improved implements and, in due course, to popularize them; the extension staff would thus become familiar with them.[20]

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[19] Co-operative farming might well begin with the joint supervision and controlled grazing of the herds of each village, as well as the co-operative utilization of draught animals.

[20] Undoubtedly, some models of animal-driven machinery which were formerly used in western Europe and the United States can still be obtained for demonstration and study from countries in eastern and southern Europe.

I. The village land development plan

143. Once the village plans for land improvement in the basic production programme of community development have reached a certain stage, they might be supplemented by plans for the allocation of hitherto untilled lands and for the review of existing ploughland crops. Such new uses of land will have to take the wishes and tastes of the farmers, and their food requirements—which, as a rule, will mean increasing not only milk, but vegetable and fruit production, which need only labour—into account. Other considerations include the conditions of production, both natural and modified by land-improvement; local marketing conditions (proximity of towns, processing factories, etc.); and the national needs, as expressed in the national plan.

144. The establishment of such village plans—not an easy task—thus implies collaboration among the best block technicians, who can represent the interests of the community and apply the national plan at the village level by adapting it carefully to local conditions, and to the needs of the best local farmers.[21] After some of the major obstacles to agricultural progress have been overcome on the lines just suggested, which are in a sense remedial measures, attention can be given to other aspects of agricultural development. This will help to improve and amend any defects in the proposed land development plan, and make it possible to determine which are the most important agricultural improvements as far as any individual village is concerned, and the order of priority of local investments. To cite an example of local improvement: "Waste water from the communal washing place is frequently available. This flow might be directed through a cowshed with a concrete floor but a home-made roof and the water enriched with liquid manure could be led to a patch of some rank-growing grass such as Napior, Guinea or Para. Thus a limited supply of green fodder would be available throughout most of the year".[22]

145. Plans for individual families and for each agricultural holding, already prepared at the pilot stage, could then be contemplated in the third stage, to follow the applications of the village plans, under the heading of "farm management".

146. The general agricultural improvement plan sent out in outline form by the Central Government has, on the whole, been adopted by the blocks without sufficient testing to ensure that it was suitable to local conditions. The essential problem of a given village may thus often be neglected. For example, the Japanese method of rice cultivation is given too much emphasis, even where fertilizer is lacking and where rice is a very secondary crop, as in the south of Mysore. The unused reservoirs in this same region, described more fully above, can be used to produce abundant crops, etc.

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21 "How can the village development plans be reconciled with national plans in regard to the targets set and priority established?" asks Dr. Majunder. It is the role of the technicians to reconcile both points of view, local and national, but this task needs good technicians.

22 R. O. Whyte, *op. cit.*

J. The Intensification of Agriculture as a solution of under-employment problems

147. Since there is no possibility of any appreciable reduction in the active population engaged in agriculture for many years to come—on the contrary, the agricultural population is likely to increase substantially—[23] this suggests that the community development programme should stress every aspect of agricultural intensification.

148. Greater speed in carrying out the land improvement proposed above would make it possible to increase production and hence useful employment, especially in the case of the landless families which are not fully employed, and which hitherto have obtained little advantage from the agricultural programmes in community development. This land improvement would make for large-scale intensification of agriculture, and hence for increased permanent employment.

149. It appears from the Mission's observations that major irrigation schemes have not been utilized sufficiently. Double cropping, which should be one of the basic elements of community development, is not expanding with any great speed in some of the new irrigation networks.

150. For example, a region south of Mysore has been supplied with water from an irrigation canal which has ample quantities available for seven and a half months every year. But the village still grows only one annual crop, a transplanted rice which occupies the ground for four months after transplanting from the seed-bed. If the seedling stage was speeded up a little, with watering from wells or tanks, there would be plenty of time for second crops of many different kinds after the rice had been harvested: vegetables or cereals, leguminous plants for food, fodder or manure purposes, etc. While the houses in the villages have been rebuilt, full use of water, which would raise the peasants' standard of living considerably and at the same time increase the country's wealth, has not yet been achieved.

151. Wherever large-scale irrigation projects have been carried out, better liaison should be established between those who carry them out and the blocks set up locally. The blocks need more extension staff, whose task would be to encourage complementary operations, such as digging of field channels and distributories, dyke-building, etc., and the more general application of the double or even triple crop system. In other words even greater emphasis than hitherto should be put on an intensification of agriculture on a sufficiently large scale to make the projects pay and to develop the national economy at the required pace.

152. Horticulture, including fruit trees and vegetable produce, industrial crops, and in general all hoe-cultivated plants, along with modern animal husbandry, constitute the most potent means of intensifying agriculture.

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[23] Until 1965-1966, increases in the rural population will account for 45 million persons out of the total expected increase of 80 million persons, according to the Ford Foundation report cited in footnote 14 above.

153. All this assumes that the farmer who is a novice in irrigation is taught to make the proper use of water, and not to drown the crops, to hoe the ground after each watering as soon as the surface is dry, etc., for irrigation is a two-edged weapon. If it is practised in a haphazard manner, it impoverishes the soil and quickly diminishes its fertility. To prevent that from happening, manure crops and fodder crops may be introduced to begin with, and encouraged by such incentives as providing water free for a limited period of time for these crops. Later, the growing of a minimum proportion of these improvement crops might even be made compulsory.

154. A good beginning has been made in some areas in the improvement of cattle. As a basis of such improvement, however, the performance of the cattle must be measured and the records used for selecting the better types. Such recording systems should be initiated by the states. While undesirable bulls are being castrated and artificial insemination is encouraged, it must be recognized that, unless superior sires are used and strict sexual hygiene is observed, the latter can be a menace. As a number of pedigreed and proven bulls become available, the castration of male calves might be made compulsory. In the meantime owners of cattle should be fully informed of the desirability and the necessity for the elimination of sub-marginal animals. Organized marketing of livestock and livestock products should be closely linked to the livestock improvement programme.

155. A beginning has also been made in improving poultry by importing new and better strains of birds for laying and for eating. In many agricultural countries, this profitable supplementary farm activity is undertaken by the wives and daughters of the farmers, a proposal which was suggested in the Mehta Report in the section on women's programmes.

156. Plans for the improvement of pigs are under way, and more can be done. Wherever native hogs are kept, improved breeds should be substituted, provided the new kind can be fed from locally available produce, and provided that there are elements of the population who eat pork.

157. As a supplementary form of diet for those who are not strict vegetarians, more could be done to provide fish and encourage its consumption. Apart from the sea as a source of supply, large water reservoirs could be used extensively for the production of fish. The Mission saw some good co-operation between community development personnel and experimental fisheries in Orissa and Kerala. The community development programme might devote greater attention to inland fisheries by means of the construction of ponds, weed clearing, and improvements in management techniques as a result of the possibilities of control, especially over impounded waters. Further studies might be made of fish culture in Israel and Japan, where a useful and large source of protein food has been secured in this manner.

K. Village Industries

158. The *Community Development Report* 1958-59 in its section on village industries stated that:

> "There is a general feeling that the answer to the problem of unemployment is to promote more and more cottage and small-scale industries in the rural areas."

159. The Mehta Report however had criticized the rural industries programme as "the weakest spot in our programme of community development", pointing out that "the additional employment introduced in the Village was insufficient to set off the two years' increase in population".

160. The Mission was aware that there were at least two sharply contrasted points of view in India regarding the policy of developing cottage industries to absorb some of the unemployed labour in the villages, and thus to reduce pressure on the land. As the preceding section of this chapter has shown, there is a strong case for an intensification of agriculture and for absorbing more labour in productive operations of several different kinds on the land. At the same time, the promotion of village industries is an important feature in community development programmes, and it appears that there are several reasons for this. In considering these reasons and observing village industries in being, the Mission came to certain conclusions.

161. India must gradually change the concept of village self-sufficiency and relate its rural improvement programme to the industrial development of the country as a whole under the five-year plans, for the latter are designed to make modern means of production and industrial products available in ever-increasing quantities to both the urban and the rural population. If agriculture is to advance, it is essential that villagers be able to acquire improved tools, simple machinery, fertilizers, insecticides and other industrial products so urgently needed in farming operations.

162. Some observations noted during the Mission's visit gave its members reason to believe that some of the policies and programmes in the field are working at cross-purposes.[24] India already has labour resources and teams of cattle that are not fully employed. It would be unfortunate to have under-employed machinery as well. There is no doubt that lightly polished or "parboiled" rice is more wholesome and richer in vitamin B1, and is, on that account, less likely to cause beriberi, but it is not necessary to produce it by hand pounding; its production by factories could be encouraged by all available means.

163. In addition to the general ideology which encouraged spinning as a step towards village self-sufficiency, another reason for the building up of village industries was the existence in almost all villages of castes and groups of traditional artisans. Some of these, according to village research studies, live entirely by their trades; others have small plots of land to ensure a minimum food supply; others again, having no land, work as agricultural labourers, and adjust their work as artisans to the demands for hired labour.

164. It was therefore reasonable that village-based programmes in community development should recognize these traditional artisans, and plan to improve their skills, which were generally of a low quality, and assist them to market their goods. With this end in view, training schools, called "training-*cum*-production centres", were set up and small experi-

[24] For example, a graph displayed at the Nilokheri manual rice-husking shed at a training centre forecasts that by 1961 only 1 per cent of the rice husked in the district will be husked mechanically; this would apparently mean laying off equipment already installed.

mental training units were developed, at some of the extension training centres to teach village blacksmiths and carpenters how to make and repair farm implements of an improved type.

165. The Mission came to the conclusion that plans and training for small-scale industries in the rural areas should be made in the light of anticipated future developments, especially of new sources of power that may become available in the next few years and improved machines suitable for small-scale village industries. At the present time, the training of skilled artisans in metal-working, brickmaking, tanning, soap-making, etc., should receive first consideration and emphasis; it would also provide some pre-industrial training for the rural population. In many villages there were traditional artisans engaged in such industries and in the manufacture of farm implements suitable for small-scale agriculture.

166. To channel efforts satisfactorily and make them more effective, due allowance must be made for local variations, particularly in respect of resources in terms of unemployed and under-employed labour and raw material resources. For instance, the efforts made to improve the collecting of dead animals' hides,[25] and the treatment or tanning of hides in general are of great importance to the country's economy.

167. Preserved-food industries (sterilized foods, food concentrates, juices, preserves, jellies, dehydrated vegetables, powdered foods, etc.) could put up stocks of vegetables and fruit of which there is a surplus during certain seasons and no supply at all during the remainder of the year. Some regions have a glut of mangoes for two months, and hence a large proportion of them are allowed to rot; yet for the rest of the year they have scarcely any fruit. The wild sweetsop occurs abundantly on the Deccan plateau and often it is hardly gathered at all, as, for instance, in southern Hyderabad. India must seek out and preserve all available sources of foodstuffs, either for consumption in the villages (where not enough vegetables and fruit are consumed, because most of these are sold) as well as in the towns, or even for export. In general terms, the Mission regretted that it could not find many community development projects in the village industries sector which had definite links with urban markets.

168. The use of non-edible oils for soap manufacture might be worth considering. But to extol the virtues of small and unimproved oil-presses, which waste a substantial proportion of the oil because of their excessively low rate of extraction, is a questionable procedure. This would be less serious if—to cite only the most obvious example—the peanut cake were used for human consumption, as has been shown to be feasible by the Central Food Technological Research Institute at Mysore.

169. The amount of the grants allotted to village industries often seems very high, and the money used in this way is no longer available for land improvement or for industrial equipment, although these would be more useful. All the direct and indirect assistance granted to the Khadi enterprises seems very high in proportion to the total economic activity involved in the product. The Mission observed that in many villages the improved spinning wheels were lying idle for lack of repair and that

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25 Too many animals are buried without being skinned—a survival of caste prejudice that involves a serious loss to the national economy.

projects in this field were often organized in order to impress visitors rather than to strengthen the economy of the villages. Khadi production moreover appears to have monopolized efforts that in many cases would have been more productive if applied to other village industries or to the intensification of agriculture.

170. If village industry constitutes a genuine advance in labour efficiency over the traditional techniques and continues to be inspired by an unflagging desire for progress, it may be a powerful factor in promoting rural modernization, especially if it is closely adapted to the pattern of local needs. But crafts making use of subsidies to preserve outmoded methods which lead to the slowing down of spinning mills, rice mills or hydraulic oil presses, and which are artificially developed even in places where land improvements would be more productive, would be a dangerous hindrance to Indian economic development.

L. The credit problem

171. As village development plans under community development programmes take shape, the granting of loans for their implementation, and operational loans for current production could be determined. Thus it would be feasible to give especially favourable treatment to the crops most suitable to local conditions and most desirable for the country as a whole. The majority of state credits in the form of loans and, occasionally, subsidies (the latter being kept fairly low), should, however, be used for productive land improvement.

172. Agricultural credit associations in India have a long history, especially in the Punjab and Bombay, in some cases going back to the last century. Many were wiped out through the general repayment difficulties which arose during the depression that preceded the Second World War. Through community development programmes, the old credit co-operatives were re-established and many new ones were started, but the operation of this type of credit institution did not always appear to be satisfactory.

173. The credit co-operatives seldom lend any money from sources other than funds provided by the State, and all the credit needs of Indian agriculture cannot, clearly, be met from this source. As the formation of capital is an essential tool of economic progress, the credit co-operatives' first task should be to encourage peasant savings, which could be applied primarily to the needs of agriculture. This is the only way of raising enough money to cover a high proportion of the peasants' needs, and hence to cope with the institution of the money-lender. As a rule, however, these co-operatives are not even organized to receive current accounts of short-term deposits. Deposits should be encouraged by a deposit guarantee by the State banks and the grant of a relatively high rate of interest; the consequence of this would be to increase the rate of interest charged on operational loans. In countries which are relatively short of capital it would seem desirable not to imitate the capital-surplus countries and arbitrarily fix interest rates at too low a level. Even in advanced prosperous countries, credit co-operatives or credit unions charge interest rates of 12 per cent, returning surplus earnings to member borrowers annually, thus reducing the effective rate to 6 per cent or less.

174. State subsidies or grants for many agricultural improvement projects appear to constitute too large a proportion of the total cost. In the

case of an electrical pumping station, for instance, the State grant exceeded 50 per cent of the total cost. This particular investment seems likely to yield a profitable return at an early date, and for a region that already has many natural assets, the grant of a loan would have been enough.

175. Almost all the *taccavi* loans and most of the credit co-operative loans granted at present are based on land as security. It appears that, so far, the loans have been granted mainly to the well-to-do, and the proportion used for productive expenditure, according to one study of the Lucknow Planning Research and Action Institute, is no higher than 25 per cent outside the blocks and 45 per cent within the block studied—clearly an insufficient proportion. The relatively small membership of the credit co-operatives is mainly confined to the well-to-do villagers who find them a source of cheap credit. The average farmer who has no security to offer other than a prospective seasonal crop, finds it impossible to establish any credit because the approval of the State bank must be secured before the loan can be made, and this involves undue delay. In spite of very high interest rates, he turns to the money-lender, who can provide him with a loan without delay.

176. In order to enable the credit co-operatives to serve small-scale and tenant farmers by means of loans on future harvests, they are being transformed into multi-purpose co-operatives, which also market the crops and distribute fertilizer and seeds provided by the Government.

177. Where the peasantry is poor, the best form of credit is that provided in kind (fertilizer, seeds, implements, concentrated cattle-food and the like), under close supervision in order to ensure that it is in fact used for productive purposes, or, in the case of the very small "subsistence farms", for feeding the peasant and his family until the harvest is brought in; for the feeding of the worker is, after all, a production cost. Loans should provide only part of the expense, so that the producer is forced to save in order to cover the remaining costs.

M. Co-operation

178. Co-operative endeavour in general is of fundamental importance in community development because co-operative principles can be applied equally effectively in the economic, the social and indeed in many other relationships of individuals and communities. The Government of India is seeking to transform the social and economic outlook of the rural people through village organizations, and particularly through panchayats, co-operative societies and schools. The co-operative movement in the present phase of development must be concerned principally with rural economic problems which are common to many parts of India. Co-operation in land use, the acquisition of more efficient implements, the improvement in planting methods and the quality of seed, as well as the fuller employment of human resources, require immediate attention. These form a fundamental part of national plans to meet national and local needs. The Mission received much material and evidence indicating the extent to which the Planning Commission and the Central and State Governments are concerned with this problem. The Mission is also aware of the handicaps and the weakness of the co-operative movement in India resulting from the complexity of the problem, the widespread illiteracy, past concentration on agricultural credit associations, and other factors which hamper the achievement of the aim and ideal of the co-operative movement.

179. The "service co-operatives", for collective purchase and sale, joint use of equipment (such as pumps and—in due course—tractors), seem likely to provide services of the utmost importance; there can be no doubt that efforts to promote them as an aspect of community development are well worth-while. The current proposal for State monopoly of the grain trade cannot succeed unless there is a vast network of local co-operatives for storing and selling grain.

180. If these co-operatives are to succeed in their aims, it is essential that the members should be educated, that the administrative staff appointed should not only be honest but also have energy and initiative, and that the managerial staff should have advanced commercial training. The co-operatives' premises should be constructed as cheaply as possible; in other words, they should, as a rule, be built by the local workers themselves.

181. Prospects for the development and organization of producer marketing co-operatives appear to be much brighter, but, again, their establishment should be preceded by an intensive and well-planned information programme. Marketing co-operatives should form a major part of any plan for national or State marketing of agricultural products, particularly of foodgrains, and producer co-operatives should indeed be the foundation of a national marketing plan. Farmers need protection from the effects of price fluctuations they also need immediate initial payments for their produce on delivery, as well as protection from local money-lenders and speculative interests. Experience in food producing countries, and already to a limited extent, in India, has shown that these objectives can best be attained first through local co-operative associations and then by national or State marketing boards operating on behalf of the primary producers, providing them with initial payment, a guaranteed minimum price, and, at the end of the marketing period, the distribution of any surplus earnings on a *pro rata* basis according to deliveries. Examples of producer co-operative marketing organizations at local levels are to be found in several countries, but a good example is that of the grain pools organized in the Prairie provinces of Canada. There, a high percentage of grain growers market their produce through their own local and terminal elevators (grain storage facilities); since it was established, the farmers have given loyal support to a national marketing board set up by the Government. Success in this field would provide a foundation for other forms of agricultural co-operation, such as the use of more efficient implements, improved seed, fertilizer, methods of cultivation and, eventually, the wider policy of voluntary co-operative farming.

182. Much attention has been given in India to the co-operative use of land through co-operative farms. This appears to be the most difficult form of agricultural co-operative to organize successfully.

183. The Congress Party, at its Nagpur meeting, ruled that lands recovered through land reform should be assigned to the appropriate panchayat for co-operative exploitation by the landless. Giving land to the landless, who are ignorant of efficient farm management, may, however, merely lead to a reduction in agricultural output. Furthermore, to entrust the interests of the landless to the panchayat, which is generally controlled by the most powerful of the village's inhabitants, may not necessarily be the best way of protecting those interests. In

certain circumstances it might even render the landless more dependent than ever. Moreover, in the Indian political context, co-operative exploitation often runs the risk of incurring hostility on the part of the money-lender-tradesmen and large landowners. It cannot succeed unless there is mutual trust among the members; unless they are, as a body, devoted to the common task; unless the technical management is of a high order; unless there are profitable markets; and unless capital is plentiful. All these requirements are met by the co-operative at Subhash, near Poona; hence its success. India, however, does not have a sufficient number of adequately trained agronomists available to provide one well-trained manager-agronomist for each group of seventy peasants, as in the case of this co-operative and the Government of India cannot lend, as it did in this particular case, an amount of more than 400 rupees per acre of land cultivated, in addition to the slightly higher amount lent by the credit banks.

184. Again, at Subhash, as in most of the co-operatives so far established in India, the land had been recently allocated or let by the Government, which constituted an indirect form of pressure to ensure the establishment of the co-operative. The Mission did not hear of many cases of successful co-operatives based on the voluntary agreement of peasant landowners to place their lands under a form of collective exploitation. Almost everywhere in the world collectivization has encountered resistance from the peasant or farming community and has led, at least in its initial phase, to a drop in production.

185. This does not in any way detract from the potential value of the co-operative farm, which makes more efficient use not only of machinery, but also of animals and manpower, and can constitute a useful means of promoting, through its manager, the popular dissemination of technical knowledge, since the peasants will listen more readily to the manager than to a mere adviser. The Mission was told at Anand College of Agriculture that the family farm could do very well with the help of loans and technical counselling. These two fundamental conditions for success can be applied to any type of agricultural enterprise including co-operative farms. The Mission therefore suggested that decisions should be taken to plan a whole series of carefully conducted and meticulously analysed local experiments so that it will be possible to organize the various forms of co-operative—intensive or otherwise—which will have the best chances of success in different regions.[26] Such experiments should be combined with evolving suitable material for use in educational campaigns. Furthermore, detailed studies of successful farming co-operatives in other countries, particularly of the Moshav Ovdim in Israel may be very helpful.

186. Reference has already been made to the need for an intensive educational campaign prior to the establishment of co-operative associations. Except for the good work which the Mission saw in Bombay and Madras states, no provision has apparently been made for the systematic teaching of the membership of existing co-operative societies. This is generally true of co-operatives engaged in village industries, including some of the most desirable projects, such as tanning, metal-working and the production of better implements and tools. Generally,

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26 According to Dr. Majunder, the three primary interests of co-operative farming are to remove caste domination and the share-cropping system, and to create economic holdings in which modern techniques can be applied.

the Mission found that co-operative societies had neither funds assigned nor plans made for the education of their members. Officials assigned to the promotion of the co-operative movement in the blocks were anxious to form as many agricultural credit associations as possible and to carry out instructions to speed up the formation of multi-purpose co-operatives. This was being done most frequently before undertaking the intensive educational work that should precede their formation. To date, the results do not appear to be satisfactory. Much attention has been given to training staff in the operational mechanics after co-operatives have been established. This is important but only if the co-operative societies have a sure foundation in informed co-operators. In the formative stage persons who have been active in local societies and who understand and believe in the principles of voluntary co-operation should be encouraged to take an active part in promoting co-operative understanding in villages or communities other than their own. Members of Parliament and of the state legislatures, as well as members of panchayats could give, and some are giving, valuable assistance in this respect.

N. Usury and Share-Cropping—Two Major Obstacles to Community Development

187. The obstacles to co-operation are not merely a matter of organisation; they are also closely related to the social structure in village society, which can hamper of facilitate the work of a co-operative. Some reduction of economic inequalities would probably help in this matter; hence the importance of land reform measures (such as "ceilings") which, as already stated, should on no account be unduly delayed. Two major obstacles to the successful functioning of the community development programme in villages are, however, the systems of money-lending and of share-cropping.

188. A real community of interests between money-lender and debtor, between landowner and share-cropper, who receives half of the crop while bearing the entire cost of cultivation, is obviously not easy to establish.

189. This also raises the problem of land-use methods. Tenant farming at a fixed and moderate rental, which is often against the state laws, would be far preferable to share-cropping, which is at present permitted. Tenant farming was a vital factor in the agricultural development of north-western Europe, whereas development in southern Europe was hampered by share-cropping.

190. A quasi-egalitarian society of peasant-landowners would comprise a larger proportion of persons directly interested in the benefits to be derived from land improvements. This would not apply to a non-egalitarian society.

191. India first abolished the "middlemen", the "zamindari", and then, under a series of local statutes, largely prohibited fixed-rate land rents. But share-cropping, regarded as a form of partnership, is till permitted and seems to be no less widely practised than hitherto. The 1953/54 *Progress Report on the Five-Year Plan* stated that the purpose of the reform was to reduce rents to one-quarter or one-fifth of the value of the harvest. But in Eastern India the Mission found a share-cropper receiving only a third of the harvest, despite the fact that he had

supplied the seed, the draught animals and the implements, and that in such circumstances the law of the State entitles him to 60 per cent. Thus the law was not observed and the landowner sought to justify his share of two-thirds in the yield of the harvest by the fact that he had supplied 35 kg. of sulphate of ammonia per hectare—a mere sprinkling, just sufficient to enable him to claim that the contract was of the *krishan* type, under which he is entitled to two-thirds if the share-cropper provides nothing more than his labour. Thus under a distinctly progressive system of legislation the social situation can in certain circumstances be worse than that recognized by established custom. When, as in the example quoted, failure to abide by the provisions of the law saps a village's community spirit, the community development authority should be empowered to step in. Ignoring the existence of the problem does not solve it. In the Punjab the Mission found rents amounting to more than half the value of the harvest, and similar rents (two-thirds to the landowner) are also reported from near Tanjore (Madras). It seems to us that the most urgent task—more urgent than the preparation of further legislation—is to ensure the proper enforcement of the existing laws. There sometimes seems to be a substantial proportion of landowners among the senior administrative and political staff this will not always be easy, and there sometimes seems to be a widespread confusion in India between what is intended and what in fact exists.

192. By far the most common arrangement for the partition of the harvest is the "fifty-fifty" rule, by which all costs of cultivation are borne by the share-cropper. Near Madras, a share-cropper who adopted the highly recommended Japanese method of rice-growing paid for all the fertilizer himself, and the landowner, without spending a rupee, pocketed half the value of the increased crop yield. The share-cropper told us that he had no intention of continuing to practise a technique which mainly benefited his landlord. It is calculated that if the share-cropper pays for all the fertilizer himself he will generally lose on the deal. The defects and the antiquated nature of the social structure where inequalities assume enormous proportions often constitute a major obstacle to economic progress.

O. Problems of Staff and Supervision

193. In view of the outstanding importance of increasing agricultural production, the question was raised once or twice with the Mission whether a departmental approach would not be more effective, following perhaps the conclusions of the Commission of Inquiry into Staff matters carried out by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. The various arguments supporting the multi-purpose approach of the community development movement will be examined in Chapter V. At this point, however, certain problems of staffing and supervision, which cause difficulties in the speeding up of agricultural production, will be discussed.

194. The village level worker is both a multi-purpose worker and responsible for disseminating progressive agricultural methods among the farmers, and assisting them in the actual operations. The Mehta Report emphasized that this man had sixty-four different obligations to fulfil in a wide variety of fields. In addition, the scope of his work may cover 2,000 farm families or more, and the Mission observed more

than once that a task of this magnitude is virtually impossible of achievement.

195. His functions in distributing fertilizer, seeds and insecticides might, in time, be handed over to the co-operatives, if they are efficiently run; and certain social or health duties might also be taken away from him and given to members of the panchayat.

196. The multi-purpose approach may, in time, undergo substantial evolution, as farmers become educated to use specialist services, and as these services become available at the local level. Progress is invariably the result of greater specialization. In the meantime, it would be desirable for the *gram sevak* to intensify his skills in agriculture in the broad sense, and to relieve him as much as possible of office work.

197. On this basis, the training of the *gram sevak* should be concentrated more on agricultural matters. It might begin at 14 or 15 years of age, with three years of study at a real agricultural school, providing sound practical training. [27]Youths of lower castes and of landless families should be assisted to enter such training. Extension training should be given to round off this education. After two or three years of field experience, the best of the village level workers might be sent to special divisions of the agricultural colleges and later promoted to higher posts. The only way to attract the best types of persons to this career is by giving them reasonable prospects of promotion.

198. A modification of this proposal has already been established in Bihar, where village level workers shall have a two-year diploma course in agriculture, followed by 6 months extension training. This is partly in recognition of the fact that 75 per cent of the village level worker's time must be spent on agriculture, and partly also in order to give him an opportunity for further study and promotion.

199. The Mission was also told by the Planning Commission that it had been decided that all village level workers should be sent to a refresher course at least every two years.

200. At the block level, the extension officer for agriculture or animal husbandry should be first and foremost a good "all-rounder", capable of grasping the essentials of modern scientific data. He will thus be able to decide, in conjunction with the district research specialist and agronomist (whom he should be at liberty to call in for consultation or to consult more often than at present), what is practically and economically applicable to the natural region to which he is assigned. Given a higher level of competence in the extension and research personnel, it would be easier to relax all round, in the light of local conditions, the present unduly rigid programme of agricultural improvement. The extension officer, in conjunction with his colleagues in the block specializing in irrigation systems and soil conservation, would have charge of the land development and later of the crop-growing plans for each village. These plans would also constitute operational blueprints for the *gram sevaks,* who would collaborate at a more strictly local level in drawing them up and carrying them out.

201. To supplement the extension officers at the block level, each district should, if possible, have an increasing number of more highly

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[27] The same considerations would apply to the training of managers of future co-operative farms. India would, in fact, need several hundred thousand such persons

specialized technical experts. Their task would be to popularize one or the other branches of agricultural science, whether a particular crop, or type of animal husbandry vital to the region, or plant protection, forestry, irrigation, drainage, soil conservation, etc. These experts could produce simple material in the local language which would provide the rank-and-file farmers with current data on agricultural progress in popular style. Another set of more detailed material would be needed for the extension officers, the village level workers and the more enlightened farmers.

202. India possesses a considerable number of internationally-known agronomists but a substantial part of their work tends to be devoted to pure science, for example, to cytology, and research for immediate application does not always seem to be accorded the important place it merits in view of the immense problems of practical agriculture. In general, insufficient attention appears to have been paid to the genetic improvement of such secondary food plants as millet, leguminous foodstuffs, vegetables and tubers (especially the sweet potato), and to the improvement of forage plants. The systematic study, on the basis of natural "microregions", of the existing growing methods, preparation of the soil, crop systems and crop-rotation with a view to developing improved practices and crop rotations for each such region, with a selection of crops better suited (whether naturally or with the help of irrigation, soil conservation or increased fertilization) to both national targets and local conditions, is a subject which is often accorded insufficient importance. Crop rotation would benefit by being diversified and staggered over the different fields of each individual farm, according to such factors as distance from the village, thickness of the soil coverage, richness and nature of the soil and so forth. At present it is too uniform.

203. Local improvements of this kind should be one of the main activities of the best extension officers. Popularization will not be nearly so effective unless it is preceded by a detailed study of the existing situation with a view to determining bottlenecks and the best order of priority for investment. The importance of such concepts does not seem to be sufficiently recognized. [28]Similarly, the economic impact of the practices recommended by the research stations often seems not to have been fully realized.

P. The Final Problem: Increasing Labour Investment

204. In another context, reference was made (see paragraph 99 above) to the low average rate of land revenue assessment and to the fact that it varies to an excessive degree. The question has been raised whether it might be possible to increase it to, say, 5 to 8 per cent of the gross produce according to the regularity of the harvests, the surplus so lived being returned to the villages in the form of, for example, a subsidy towards land improvements, water-supply organization or equipment, or soil conservation, or to village industry for processing agricultural products. The villages would then eventually be just as well off, but would have invested more labour, which is precisely what is required.

205. The question has also been raised of whether each panchayat should be granted the additional right to impose a sort of tax in kind,

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[28] See Amir Amir Ali *Land of Tagore*, Calcutta, Indian Statistical Institute, 1959.

as a mean of carrying out and maintaining large-scale projects. in the form of perhaps from 10 to 20 days' labour a year for each physically fit adult over sixteen years of age of either sex and of every caste. It should, however, be added that the levy would have to be substantially greater if it were to achieve noteworthy results. A rich person not wishing to perform manual work could pay two or three times the daily rate of remuneration; a peasant owner would work without remuneration, if necessary supplying his own draught animals for haulage and tillage purposes; the poor man and his family would be fed in return for his day's work. Such a tax in kind or labour is currently still in use in parts of Europe. Its acceptance would be facilitated if it were to be imposed in terms of specific operations (roads, drainage or irrigation canals, soil conservation), rather than in terms of days per year. It is, however, important that it be a real tax, which cannot be evaded, and not a voluntary contribution. Experience has shown the latter to be inadequate. Larger groups of volunteers might, however, work on larger-scale state projects.

206. A national labour service, which has been widely discussed in India, would supply the State with a labour corps able to undertake land improvements which are not directly profitable, such as reforestation, soil conservation in semi-arid regions, minor irrigation works in tribal areas, flood control, and certain large-scale public works. The Mission was aware of several forms of voluntary labour service carried out in India by such bodies as the Bharat Sevak Samaj, National Cadet Corps and others. The Mission endorses this principle of voluntary service, and would like to see it extended. At the same time, its members believe that an all-India plan to utilize manpower from both town and country is an urgent requirement, as the Mission found in the villages visited a great number of idle young men, and a dire need for work which manual labour can easily carry out. The Government may consider whether the time is ripe for a national youth service for specified age groups, regardless of individual economic circumstances. Young people who will devote from 6 to 12 months of their labour to the building of India may later be rewarded and given priority in applying for jobs, entrance to colleges and universities, etc.

207. Implementation of such a project requires great caution and should be preceded by limited experiments. In the hands of a totalitarian government, such service may amount to compulsory labour and be open to many abuses. There are instances, however, of compulsory labour services for young people having been introduced by some democratic governments in times of crisis, for defence preparations or post-war reconstruction, with good results. Such was the case with the Civilian Conservation Corps in the United States of America during the depression years, the Youth Brigades in Yugoslavia after the Second World War, the Builders Brigades in Ghana and recent limited experiments with a Youth Corps in Jamaica.[29]

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[29] Situated in the Yallahs and Christiana Land Authorities areas are the residential youth camps, in which 1,000 boys between the ages of 15 to 21 are given one year's orientation in good community living. They receive training in basic skills, such as carpentry, cabinet making and agriculture; they have erected the camp buildings in which they live and are responsible for the working and maintenance of the camp. In addition the boys are engaged during their stay in carrying out national projects relating to the Christiana and Yallahs Valley Land Authorities. These include reforestation, building of water sheds, roads and community projects, which the Government would not otherwise have been carrying out at this stage.

208. An obstacle to instituting such a service is its cost. The youths must be fed, clothed and housed. They should also receive some education in citizenship and must be provided with some minimum of recreational facilities. Whether India can afford to finance such a service can only be answered by actual testing of the idea in limited projects. [30]The advantages are many—most important, to give the young generation the opportunity of social service to the country, to foster a feeling of national unity and to lift the youths above caste prejudices and provincialism, and to inculcate a sense of discipline.

209. It would be worth exploring whether food surpluses from abroad can be used to feed the youths engaged in public work projects as has been done in some other countries, and above all, the poorest section of the village population engaged in land improvement or communal tasks. Furthermore, some equipment, such as tools, tents, canteens, etc., can probably be obtained from countries which may be ready to offer such equipment from their military surpluses.

210. Experience throughout the world has repeatedly shown that modern society does not progress speedily enough on the basis of only voluntary efforts inspired by charity and goodwill. Even movements with strong idealistic appeal of *Bhoodan, Gramdan* and *Shramdan* cannot be put into practice on a sufficiently large scale to solve such difficult social problems and such vast economic problems as those of India. Many democratic societies levy taxes which may be settled in money, material or labour. This is particularly necessary in societies where the principal available wealth is in the form of unused labour; levies of this kind have been among the basic factors in the development of Europe and North America.

211. India must make a greater labour investment if agricultural production is to be speeded up. The community development movement can play a vital part in bringing about this urgently needed progress. Before it can do so, however, it must win the confidence of the majority of the people by avoiding too exclusive dependence on the more well-to-do persons in the villages and by not being afraid to take up the cudgels against social abuses, against infringements of the law—such as the kind of share cropping in which the farmer receives one third of the crop—and against usury and speculative sharp practices.

212. In addition, the community development programme must give the technical expert his due in modern society, treating him on at least the same footing as the administrator proper. '[31]If the status of the agricultural specialist is improved, a better class of agronomists will be recruited and, ultimately, in adequate numbers. If a year of village service as *gram sevaks* were made compulsory for all students graduating from agricultural colleges, it would provide the community development movement with youthful, dynamic and skilled staff, and the prospective agronomist would gain invaluable practical training which, in due course, would make him more valuable than at present. The community development movement must aim at inculcating a new spirit, resolutely social in aim in that it affords real protection for the poor,

[30] In certain camps, volunteers might provide an average of one half of the work of the agricultural worker, and their daily pay would exceed twice that of the latter.

[31] The importance of the technician's social role is not recognized in India, because his pay scale—as that of the university professor—is far lower than that of the administrative staff. This is generally characteristic of the under-developed countries.

and solidly backed up by an improved technique. In the light of this new spirit, the order of priority of activities and investments would be decided in the interests of the economy as a whole, immediate efficiency and long-term social objectives.

213. Maximum efficiency cannot be attained from a programme which is the same for the whole of India, for where natural and human conditions are so widely diverse, the same order of priority cannot be applied everywhere. This means decentralization and greater flexibility, with more initiative and more responsibility all down the line; but it also implies greater competence in the skilled staff. In this connexion, we are informed that the following steps have been taken:

(1) The schematic budget has been made more flexible to meet local needs. For example, except for the provisions for "Minor Irrigation" and "Agriculture" and "Rural Industries", the rest of the provisions can be diverted from one head to another. Even in the case of "Minor Irrigation", if the scope for minor irrigation does not exist in a block, the provision can be spent on schemes relating to Agriculture, including rural electrification, and also on other schemes connected with Food Production. The State Governments have been advised to draw up programmes suited for special areas such as hilly, plains, coastal, desert and blocks around cities, and modify the schematic budget provision accordingly.

(2) For blocks in the heart of the tribal areas, *i.e.* the special multi-purpose blocks, there is a special pattern of the budget carrying a higher provision of Rs. 2.7 million and with more staff to serve a population of 25,000 to 30,000.

(3) The authority to draw up an over-all block programme for five years is vested with the Block Development Committee.

(4) Powers of expenditure and sanction have been delegated all along the line, with the result that almost all the schemes can be sanctioned by the Block Development Committee or at the district level.

214. Above all, the community development programme in India must put priority during the forthcoming years on increasing agricultural production. The situation seems to be more serious than realized a few years ago and the Mission joins the chorus of concern expressed by teams, both national and international, which investigated this problem in India recently. [32]Against this overshadowing danger of starvation, all forces in India must be marshalled. Other nations would undoubtedly give a helping hand to the people of India, but the magnitude of the problem and the seriousness of the food crisis require, above all, that the people of India must put the solution of the food problem ahead of other objectives and undertake a supreme effort to secure India's future.[33]

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[32] See the Ford Foundation report cited in footnote 13 above.

[33] S. V. Venkataramen, has written: "The people, the masters of the situation, must be educated *slowly, and we must wait* until they permit the authorities to carry out measures which they know are correct". (R. O. Whyte, *op. cit.*) With such an attitude, the deficit of food grains will be 28 million tons at the end of the third Five Year Plan, replies the Ford Foundation report (see footnote 13 above).

Chapter V

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AS A MULTI-PURPOSE MOVEMENT

A. An Examination of the Multi-Purpose Approach

1. *The over-all aim of community development.*

215. The over-all aim of community development in India is to assist in the building of a modern nation, bringing all its potential resources into line with modern political, economic and social standards as established in the majority of democratic countries.

216. As far as the rural areas were concerned, this over-all aim embodied two main objectives:

(1) To attack the "primal poverty" in the villages and to raise standards of living;

(2) To revitalize village life by revitalizing old, and creating new, institutions.

2. *Reasons for the multi-purpose approach.*

217. The multi-purpose approach was adopted because it was believed that only on such lines could the villagers be roused to understand what community development could do for them and to participate in the work. This was the clue to the initial community development projects mentioned in Chapter III as well as to the concepts held and expounded by the earlier community development planners and workers. It was hoped that, through a multi-purpose approach, the villagers, who were crushed by this state of poverty, would be roused to make greater efforts to grow more food, to begin to have more "wants", and to see some prospects of satisfying them; and, as they slowly emerged from the depths of poverty, to "raise their sights" for the future of their families and their village community.

218. The term "felt needs", taken from United States extension service usage, has worn thin and ceased to represent either the initial state of the villagers' conditions, or their outlook once they had taken some of the first steps towards recovery. The blanket use of this term has also disguised the fact that there was, in the majority of Indian villages, a small section of families who were not sunk in poverty and were, in a sense, the arbiters of destiny in the village through the intricate patterns of caste relationships, and the dominance of the larger land holders. This aspect of social organization in the villages has been referred to several times in Chapter IV above.

3. *The early testing period.*

219. The early community development projects tested out different methods in applying the multi-purpose approach, and also experimented with the extent of financial assistance which was required to achieve

certain targets. The period during which the early community development projects were in operation was, however, too brief to test the all-important element of the people's co-operation. It covered too short a time to find out how much the villagers, richer or poorer, were prepared to contribute in cash or labour; whether they set a high value or any value at all on the targets put before them; and what kind of expectations were aroused in them, again on a differential basis according to their economic status, as a result of the total or partial success of the early programmes.

4. *Results of forcing the pace*

220. The pace of programme planning and of extending programmes in additional areas was suddenly forced by the urgent national need for speeding up agricultural production, especially of food, any by the general political and social situation, demanding a nation-wide planned approach to community development and no longer a limited experimental project approach.

221. The result of this expansion was the creation of an army of officials to plan and execute community development in all the states and at the Centre whose place in the general administrative system has been described in Chapter III above. These officials had to be drawn from a number of existing technical and administrative departments, with no experience of the new multi-purpose community development approach to village problems. Furthermore, the great majority had no clear concept, and some had none at all, of what community development was about, and, above all, that community development was aiming at helping the villagers to shake off the bonds of their poverty and to take a share in creating a new future for themselves and their family and their village.

5. *The village level worker and his supporting advisers*

222. In these circumstances, it was probably right to concentrate on the village level worker, whose functions and training were briefly referred to in Chapter IV above. He was the man among the community development officials who was destined to be in close and constant touch with village people. The ultimate execution of plans, formed at the state and national level, rested in his inexperienced hands. At first his training was, in the exigencies of the situation, brief and inadequate, but it was always hoped that his rural background—for the early recruitment gave preference to young men who came from village homes —would make him sympathetic with farming families and able to understand the nature and complexity of their problems.

223. He had, however, neither enough technical knowledge to give adequate help, nor a wide enough general education to be able to see the inter-relatedness of bad farming methods, malnutrition and desease, illiteracy, and the bondage of debt. For the technical side of his job he, therefore, depended on the extension advisers at the block level who formed the next echelon in the community development hierarchy above him. These, in turn, needed supervising on the technical side and organizing on the administrative side in order that the multi-purpose approach, as typified by the village level worker, might be maintained. We have seen, however. that at least 75 per cent of his time was necessarily devoted to agriculture. and while that was inadequate,

for the reasons given in the preceding chapter, the other aspects of his work were also handled inadequately.

6. *Results of rapid expansion of staff.*

224. There were two almost inevitable results from this rapid expansion of staff in community development programmes, and the hierarchical relationship set up on the lines of the general Indian administration, as described in Chapter III above.

(1) It became easier to transmit a community development programme from the top downwards in the form of a nation-wide, or at least state-wide, series of common targets and common methods of achieving those targets. These might be Japanese methods of rice cultivation, or feeder roads, or drinking water wells, or children's playgrounds and others, which are listed in the annual report of the Ministry of Community Development. Many of these targets were of universal application and importance, such as feeder roads and drinking water wells. Many were applicable in certain areas and wide of the mark in other areas, as pointed out in Chapter IV.

As a result of the uniformity in community development programmes it was easier to pin down achievements to the achievement of visible targets, whether in agriculture or village improvement. The emphasis was on instruction about methods and the calculation of necessary finances, including labour contributions from the villagers, in order to attain these achievements;

(2) The other result of the rapid expansion of programmes and staff, equally inevitable as the former, was that the original aim of stimulating and drawing out the village people's initiative and whole-hearted co-operation came a bad second to the apparent necessity for the production of more visible and concrete results. There was neither time, nor was it the most direct method, to wait for villagers to make their own plans, work out how to execute them, ask for advice, and then proceed to calculate how much financial help they needed. Hence the recent change-over in some blocks which had completed their five or six years' programme from stage I to stage II, with the consequent decrease in block funds available, has found the villagers on the whole unprepared to take up full responsibility for programmes, either in terms of planning or financing.

7. *Distance between staff and village conditions.*

225. It seems to be a law of human relationships that, as a staff of a service department grows, involving more and more supervision by a constantly growing number of supervisors, the whole staff grows increasingly further away from the grass roots level of the conditions which must be improved.

226. The pertinence of this law is clearly demonstrated in the Indian community development programme. The rapid growth of the community development staff has meant that they have moved increasingly

further away from the original impetus and clarity of vision of the former small circle of community development workers. Hence there has arisen a need for a "philosophy of community development" couched in general terms, which sometimes seem remote from village realities. There has also arisen a necessity for orientation courses to acquaint the staff, already on the job, with this general philosophy.

8. *Need for redical re-thinking by the staff.*

227. From the beginning, but especially recently, emphasis has been laid on "people's participation" as an essential element in the improvement of village life and raising the standards of living in rural areas. The meaning and extent of this participation will be discussed in Chapter VI below. The community development staff at present, however, largely think in terms of programmes dictated or indicated on a state or national level and of how to spend the allocations of money. They have to do a radical re-thinking of their job, a *volte-face,* in fact, if they are to put themselves in the place of village people who look at these programmes from an internal and not an external point of view. The villagers think of improvements in terms of "my family, my farm, my village". When villagers talk, they often refer to a general village situation and sometimes to the block, but seldom, if ever, to the over-all concept of community development.

9. *Injection of new ideas at the top level.*

228. A foreigner who has spent much time in India, both before and during the community development period, has described the community development movement as illustrating "the genius of the Indian people". While the machinery, so to speak, of community development has produced more and more officials executing over-all and detailed plans in the states and blocks with a view to ultimate total coverage, a fresh outlook has, from time to time, been injected into the movement at the top level through; on the one hand, the annual evaluation reports undertaken for the Planning Commission, and, on the other hand, the consideration of these reports at the annual Community Development Conference, formerly called the Development Commissioners Conference. As noted in Chapter III above, there was a parallel form of evaluation to this regular official stock-taking and opportunity for fresh thinking about community development in the form of Parliamentary teams and the Committee on Plan Projects which have given a great deal of time to investigating and evaluating the community development movement, the most important of these being the Mehta Report.

229. While the main evaluation studies have been made chiefly at the block level, at which budgets are drawn up and programmes planned and executed, the unofficial teams have carried out a large part of their investigations at the village level. In this connexion it is illuminating to hear Members of Parliament and other non-officials discuss the merits of "walking to villages" and spending a night or two in a village to give the village people time to talk with them unhurriedly about what they had done, what they liked or did not like in the community development programme, and what their expectations were for present and future progress.

230. This Indian genius for courageous original thinking, and the injection of these fresh ideas into a huge administrative machine like the community development movement, has, at the moment, stopped short of finding the most effective lines of communication, either from the top to the bottom or *vice versa*. Fresh ideas and original thinking is going on at the top level at the Centre and in some of the states. There are stirrings too in the villages which will be discussed in the next chapter. New ideas about village economy are emerging. Some individual farmers and some co-operative groups see a new future ahead of them. Some of the new village amenities open up new prospects for all village families, even the poorest.

10. *Lines of communication.*

231. As regards the lines of communication between the top level and the village level, they exist administratively, in the ordered hierarchy of official responsibility for action, worked out in detail—in far too great detail—at every level. There may however, be some lack of understanding among the top level officials about how to transmit their new thinking about community development to all the officials below them, or the very size of the official community development machine may make this particular kind of communication difficult; at any rate, the existing lines of communication seem to be blocked. Many, perhaps the majority of, community development officials are, on the whole, out of touch with village expectations. Officials regard their function as being mainly to instruct and to "organize", and seldom to sit patiently and listen until the slowly-formulated realistic thoughts of the villagers come to the surface. This patience and capacity for listening to villagers is brilliantly demonstrated by some of the very top level officials. But while they sit quietly and wait for the villagers to speak, a flock of minor officials buzz around, wanting to demonstrate their activities, to push plans and figures under the eyes of the high official and prove that they have been "on the job".

232. The Mission found several examples of the ways in which the lines of communication from the top downwards through all the echelons of community development officials are blocked. Officials in the lower ranks still talk about the "felt needs" of the villagers and the peculiarities of the "rural mind". Top-level community development officials have long since discarded this terminology, if indeed they ever used it, for they are refreshingly free of catchwords and blanket terms which confuse and disguise the real issues. One must therefore wonder why handbooks, texts and training syllabuses on various aspects of community development still contain all these outdated catchwords. In many training centres they are certainly faithfully taught and dutifully learned, with strange results.

233. Until these lines of communication are opened up, and the free flow of ideas can be assured from the very top level down through all the ranks of officials, and from the village level up through the ranks of officials, the whole community development programme cannot be, in the words of the latest community development report, "revitalized". The vitality is there at the very top level, and to an increasing extent in the villages themselves. But some kind of drastic change involving a more alert and open mind, and a real desire to get alongside village people, has to take place among the community development officials at every level above the village level worker, and including, sometimes, the village level worker himself.

11. *Democratic decentralization.*

234. A new emphasis has emerged in the last two years on what the Mehta Report calls "democratic decentralization". This is a many-sided concept even at the village level, including the political and administrative aspects of local government at its lowest level; rudimentary local economic planning and utilization of local resources; the responsibility for providing and maintaining village amenities, such as water supplies, roads, sanitation, lighting, etc.; and the due representation of two elements in village society which have hitherto been ignored—women and the scheduled castes.

235. Recent policy decisions have led to a further breakdown of this concept of democratic decentralization by emphasizing the strengthening and revitalizing of three village institutions: the panchayat, the co-operative society, and the school. At the block level, the former advisory development committee is to become the block development committee, with representation from village panchayats.

236. It is characteristic of the Indian administration that once a policy has been decided on, swift executive action follows. Hence, in all parts of the country except in certain special areas, panchayats as representative institutions have been or are about to be set up, and have vested in them a wide range of responsibilities.

12. *Questions arising from the transfer of power.*

237. Several questions arise from this rapid transfer of power to local bodies at the village level charged with planning and executing a community development programme for their own community. It is essential to look into these questions, in order that the fullest use might be made of this bold concept without losing the impetus of the earlier community development programmes, which were characterized by a sense of urgency and the multi-purpose approach. The chief risks in any transfer of power (in what is, in the main, a service programme, as can be seen in the development of municipal services in most countries) are a slowing down of progress in certain directions, timidity in respect of raising and spending money, and over-emphasis on what may prove to be sectional advantages. Four specific questions arise in this context.

(1) The first question concerns the representative character of the statutory panchayat and its responsibilities for village affairs, which will be more fully discussed in Chapter VI below. A new element which is now present in all statutory panchayats is the requirement of reserving seats on the panchayat for women and for scheduled castes and tribes. Another new factor in panchayat responsibilities is the formulating of village development plans and seeing that they are carried out;

(2) The second question, which follows from the first, is whether, if the village panchayat is to be responsible for development activities, it will continue, and perhaps stimulate, the multi-purpose character of community development programmes at the village level. If the answer is in the affirmative, will the panchayat be able to count on a more general support in the village for community development programmes than the village level worker has been able to

rely on? This may be a very important and decisive step in combining local responsibility with local initiative and with local co-operation in a community development programme. This will be discussed further in Chapter VI below;

(3) The third question concerns the lines of communication between the panchayat and the community development officials, and *vice versa.* It has been suggested that the village level worker should be the development secretary of the panchayat, leaving the panchayat secretary to serve the panchayat in all its other functions. The village level worker should be able in this case to make articulate the wishes and plans of the panchayat to officials at the block level, and, conversely, to transmit and explain to the panchayat block decisions about priorities in community development programmes and allocations of money. The village level worker, as one line of communication, will be reinforced by the panchayat members from his villages who serve on the block development committee. There is always, however, a risk of the block development committee performing the function of rubber stamping decisions already taken by officials at the block or higher levels. The vigour of block development committees and their effective, as distinct from purely formal, functions may well depend on the ease and reality of communication between the village level worker and each of his panchayats. This would have been more likely to succeed if the Mehta Report proposal, to double the number of village level workers in a block, had not been turned down by the Planning Commission;

(4) The last question concerns another type of communication, namely the guiding as well as the specific training of panchayat members for their new roles. So far, brief training courses have been held for panchayat members, as farmers, in specific agricultural techniques. There is some talk of holding "job-training" courses for panchayat members as constituting a local government unit, on a broad variety of civic questions and also including procedural matters (records, accounts, meeting procedures and so on). These courses can be, and indeed are, almost wholly instructional, no doubt with demonstrations, but nevertheless teaching the panchayat members a definite skill. If the panchayat it ultimately to be an effective planning unit as well as an executive of those plans, the members need a different kind of training, based upon problem-solving, and illustrated by simple forms of case studies. Both these techniques should, if rightly handled, help the panchayat members to think for themselves, to analyse problems, and to discover for themselves how decisions are taken and how the validity of a particular judgement can be tested. Many of these matters they already know something about, but they do not recognize what they know. They need help to make their knowledge articulate and to have confidence in the possession of this knowledge and to go on from there to the next step.

B. Village Programme and the Multi-Purpose Approach

238. A general estimate of what the multi-purpose approach in community development has envisaged is given in the annual reports of the Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation. The report for 1958-59 contains a table, by states, listing "cumulative achievements" under the headings of agriculture, animal husbandry, social education, rural health and sanitation, and communications. In its evaluation of village programmes, the Mission has taken a slightly broader approach, for reasons which will be clarified shortly, because it thought that due attention has not always been given to the needs of all those who form the village communities. This does not so much imply a general criticism of programmes adopted and executed up to date, but, rather, suggests that a stage has been reached at which certain new emphases in village programmes are called for. Some of these emphases were found in parts of some states, and they have confirmed the Mission's view that these new emphases form an important element in future planning. The order in which the aspects of a multi-purpose approach are here discussed does not imply that priorities are being established. One such priority, for agricultural production, was given full weight in the preceding chapter on India's resources. In one sense, school-children, young people, adults—including women—their homes and village surroundings, and their health are all priorities. The advantage of the multi-purpose approach is that it can include people and their surroundings in a total comprehensive programme and plan. The ensuing section will endeavour to discuss some salient features of this comprehensive plan, recognizing that community development programmes must fit into, be served by, and contribute to, the service programmes of several other ministries and departments besides those of the Ministry of Community Development.

1. General Education

239. The greatest task facing educational authorities in India today is the establishment of compulsory primary education. According to the third Five-Year Plan, this is to be reached by 1965. Since education is mainly a state concern, the burden of planning and execution falls on the state authorities. The Mission was, in some states, able to see considerable progress towards this goal. Extensions were being built to schools, and double shifts in some cases were resorted to in the existing shortage of space and of teachers. Many schools, however, were still in old buildings, ill-designed from the point of view of lighting and of managing four or five classes with only one or two teachers.

240. The village communities were, on the whole, much interested in the extension of school facilities at the primary and post-primary levels. In most village plans, a new school building had priority in the allocation of labour and money by the village people. Except, however, in those areas where a wave of enthusiasm had caused overcrowding in the schools, most village schools were poorly attended, and in many of the villages visited not more than half the children of school age were enrolled in available schools.

241. Teachers in many of the schools visited were not well-trained, and almost invariably had low salaries even by village level standards. The Mission realized the potential role of the teacher in many of the areas visited. It was also aware that he played until recently a relatively insignificant part in community development programmes in the village.

Some of the efforts being made to change this situation will be discussed in Chapter VII below. The Mission wishes to record its conviction that the primary school teacher must play a key role in community development, especially since the primary school is considered to be one of the main institutions in village communities, alongside the panchayat and the co-operative society. It is encourging to note that the Central Government is ready to pay 50 per cent. of the cost of improvement in teachers' salaries to states which approve schemes for raising these salaries.

242. The system of basic education introduced in India incorporates the idea of community schools and of "work-centred education". The emphasis is on teaching crafts and agriculture and on using these midia in teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. Special institutes are experimenting with the improvement of basic education, as for example those in the Punjab, Madras and Bombay. The Mission had no opportunity of examining the relation of basic education to community education, but it appeared that the concept of "basic education" may be close to what other countries call "community schools". Further study and experimentation in how schools can play their role in the economic and social improvement of local communities is undoubtedly needed in India.

243. Another encouraging development which should help to provide educated leadership in rural areas is the creation of rural institutes, which often have a status akin to that of city colleges. These rural institutes provide diploma courses in the fields of rural engineering, agriculture, social education and similar subjects.

2. Social education.

(a) *The Role of the social education organizer in community development.*

244. The functions and training of social education organizers, both men and women, have been under discussion and under fire for several years. At one end of the scale in evaluating their functions they have been called "redundant"; at the other end they are entrusted with the most vital and delicate task of training village leaders; in between these two extremes, they have responsibilities for "organizing" all kinds of village groups. According to the latest Community Development Report they are supervised technically by the following departments in the different states:

Education ;
Panchayats and Development ;
Social Welfare and Panchayats ;
Development.

245. Most social education organizers have an "educational slant" in their functions and in their actual work, through the kind of training that they get for their job. They are, or could be, therefore, in a key position to improve, revitalize, and assist in rechannelling the people's response to community development. To regard them primarily as "organizers" is not using them to their full capacity and is also a difficult and potentially dangerous function to assign to anyone of their standing

and education. To begin with, it is a waste of time and personnel to "organize village groups" without a very clear idea of what the groups are for; what activities they are likely, or are intended, to take up; and how such new groups coalesce with, differ from, or present challenges to, existing groups in the villages. Furthermore, the social education organizers have responsibility for approximately 100 villages in a block and cannot make extended stays in any one particular village to organize groups there.

246. A skilled appraisal of the need for new groups in villages to carry out new developmental or social activities is far beyond the capacity of the majority of social education organizers. Their ineffective efforts at group activities are frustrating to themselves and do not earn the esteem and confidence of other block officials.

(b) *Adult education as a main job.*

247. The assumption in this reconsideration is that the real job of the social education organizer is adult education, using that concept in a wide and comprehensive sense. To this end—and everyone would agree that the promotion of adult education is vital to a new concept of people's participation—the differences of opinion at the state and Central levels about which department of the Government is responsible for adult education should be finally resolved, and the social education organizer should be charged with specific responsibilities in adult education in rural areas. The other technical officers on the block staff are also responsible for adult education in their own fields of agriculture, co-operation, rural industries, etc. but there is still an important and relatively untouched field for the social education organizer to work in.

(c) *The place of, and need for, adult literacy.*

248. First and foremost, the social education organizers—both men and women— should be skilled in training adult literacy teachers and should promote adult literacy among villagers of the age group from 15 to 25, some of whom have been in school but have lapsed into illiteracy after a few years of ill-taught schooling. Other young people may be just able to read, but not to use their reading skill effectively. These young men and women cannot be allowed to grow up to full citizenship in the nation ignorant of the primary skills of reading and writing by which they can inform themselves about new developments and communicate their ideas in writing when necessary. Little progress was made in India in extending literacy between 1951 and 1958. While in 1951 only 16 per cent. of adults could read and write, in 1958 the number of literate people rose to approximately 21 per cent (some estimates give a figure of 25 per cent). This is the average for all states, for both rural and urban areas and for men and women. In most rural areas, the situation is much worse, and in many villages there is hardly a single literate woman. A certain tendency to glorify the illiterate peasant may also be observed. It is well established that though a farmer may be technically illiterate, he understands his economic and social problems well, and is often eager and able to improve his life by methods which do not involve knowledge of reading and writing. This is used as an excuse for not getting on with the admittedly difficult job of teaching literacy to the villagers who are just past school age, but still young enough to learn these essential skills.

249. In Saurastra and Mysore, there were successful adult literacy campaigns, well described in various reports, which can be studied and adapted to conditions in other areas. The latest Community Developmen Report lays stress on the importance of "suitable literature" on new farming methods, co-operative principles, etc., and reference was made in one state to the keeping of farm records. But none of these facilities can be made full use of until the level of literacy of adults under 30 is raised much higher than it is at present. A glance at the level of literacy among panchayat members as noted in the Fifth Evaluation Report of the Planing Commission will show what changes may have to be made in the panchayat which is the body responsible for the planning and development at the village level.

(d) *The teaching of citizenship.*

250. The Mehta Report considered that the two primary duties of the social education organizers were teaching adults about citizenship and democracy, and teaching them to read and write. At the village level, the new roles of panchayats and progressive farmers and youth groups present a field for a type of adult education which is at present hardly being touched at all. The panchayat is now both the new basic unit of local government—which covers collecting taxes—and the village planning body for development undertakings. But the panchayat members, if they are to discharge their functions in a new progressive and democratic fashion, and not on traditional lines, at this stage need opportunities of a particular kind: they need, for one thing, to understand the responsibility they have taken on for primary education, especially in the areas such as the Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Mysore where compulsory education is imminent or is already in operation. This involves not only measures to persuade parents to send their children to school, but also determination of the extent of their responsibility for the condition of the school training, the welfare of the teachers and their integration into community life.

(e) *The teaching about development planning.*

251. Discussion groups with a limited amount of instruction would give panchayat members and other younger adults a much-needed grasp of developmental aims and programmes in general, and the part their village is to play in block development planning. Some instruction in elementary economics of development can be combined with more general citizenship topics, such as the working of democracies.

252. It will not necessarily be easy for the social education organizer to work out this kind of programme. It will certainly involve his spending nights in the villages in order to get such discussion groups started. On the whole, the social education organizer, with his university background and special training, should be able to assist, if not to launch, such an adult education programme. These themes of economic development and citizenship might well be started off at a village leaders' comp, after which those who showed interest might act as village organizers of such study groups.

253. It is noteworthy, in this connexion, that, when a survey was made recently of reading interests in five states, the reading material in which new literates and those who had been to school showed least interest, was that relating to development plans and to state and national programmes

for improvement. This probably indicates the degree of unfamiliarity among peasant farmers with economic topics of wider import than village affairs.

(f) *The need for joint thinking about family and household.*

254. Both male and female social education organizers should be able to plan and demonstrate to teachers and voluntary workers how to conduct literacy classes and the teaching of citizenship, and classes in understanding those elementary economic principles which are important for managing farmlands and crops, the care and use of cattle and other livestock, and household management.

255. The family—with the house it lives in and the surroundings of that house—is the basic social unit in the village and it is equally a concern of men and women. In the planning of social education programmes there is at present a dangerous division between men's and women's interests in the village which is potentially destructive. The household in which family life is carried on and the fields on which the family livelihood is earned are the common interests of both men and women in their role of parents of a family and of breadwinners.

256. These interests include housing and the use made of household premises; the cleanliness and order of the house and its surroundings; the expenditure on household and family necessities, such as implements, utensils, furniture (if any), clothes; the daily food and its seasonal variations; the maintenance of normal health by improved standards and through better nutrition and sanitation; and the recognition of what is abnormal in human physiology and the care and treatment of diseases.

257. Some kind of common programme for families and households covering these mutual interests of men and women needs to be worked out by social education organizers of both sexes. There are some areas—admittedly few, but nevertheless, significant—where the level of general education (as in parts of Kerala or Bombay) or the social pattern of villages (as in some tribal areas, especially in Chota Nagpur and the Assam hills) puts women on a more equal footing with men in village and household affairs. In these more progressive areas, experiments can be carried out in social education for men and women on village affairs, and household and farm planning and management. In other areas, where women's literacy classes have been more successful than those for men, this new skill of the women can be channelled into some productive and stimulating activities, related to the earning and spending of money, and the use of resources.

(g) *Youth activities.*

258. Youth activities are already assigned as the responsibility of male social education organizers. As already noted (*see* paragraph 248 above) in the context of literacy teaching, a sense of urgency not to let this age group, who will be the future village leaders, be a drag on progress in the villages or a potential troublemaker, applies to the kind of social education programme for them. The 15 to 25 age group is the most important one in village society to be exposed to new ideas indispensable for economic and social advancement. All over India, the majority of young people in rural areas between the ages of 15 and 25 or 30 are unorganized and their constructive potential for economic and social improvement is

either wasted or is gradually turning into criticism and restlessness, which might lead them to a negative or destructive attitude.

259. In the first place, because they are already in many areas a self-conscious age group, and because they recognize differences in outlook between themselves and the older groups, they should be encouraged by every possible means to plan their own activities and organize their own forms of clubs or social groups. The desire for their own buildings, referred to in the next chapter, is a sign of this self-consciousness; and whether they have a place of their own or not, they have the energy and the interest to find a place where they can meet by themselves, to choose their own leaders and to plan their own programme. Effective help can often be given to such youth groups by a progressive farmer, and social education organizers should be on the lookout for this kind of local honorary adviser, especially if he is likely to develop in the boys a practical interest in progressive farming. If the school teacher has the kind of perception which helps him not to treat youths as children but as young adults, he can identify himself with their needs and outlook and be of great service to them in supporting the social education organizer at the village level.

260. The kind of sports—whether traditional or more modern—and recreation programme popular in many youth clubs, should be handled expertly by the social education organizer. This means that his training must include physical education. The importance of relating health and nutrition teaching to these sports and recreation programmes should not be overlooked, because it is much more likely to win acceptance if given in such a context. A significant lead has been given at the Poonamallee Medical Orientation Training Centre in relating the provision of recreation to physical and mental health.

261. Where there is an interest in, or a tradition of, night schools in villages, social education organizers should see that they cater to the needs and interest of this youth group by teaching literacy, arithmetic, citizenship, and some practical skills of a modern kind, such as simple mechanics to enable village youth to repair bicycles, water pumps and simple farm equipment.

262. Forms of village service, such as cleaning up the village during one hour on Sundays, are already part of many youth clubs. It is important to enlist youths in varied and stimulating forms of voluntary service, and not to allot to them only the dull routine jobs which no one else wants to do. Social education organizers should keep a lookout for the presence of voluntary youth camps in the neighbourhood and make some connexion, if it does not already exist, between these camps and their activities and the local youth clubs.

263. Finally, but probably it ought to be first on the list, is the share that youth clubs can take in providing village entertainment for themselves and everyone else. Between the major festivals and the minor occasions, such as weddings, village life provides little respite from the dull, unending rhythm of work and rest. Bands and dramatics shows can draw out initiative and ability among the boys and younger men and give them a sense of corporate fund and achievement as well as contributing to a revitalizing of village life.

(h) Targets in village improvement.

264. The early community development projects in India, as in many other parts of the world, covered certain kinds of improvements in village amenities as an integral part of their programme. These became the early targets for the community development staff to suggest to villagers, in order to ascertain their response and to demonstrate the principle of self-help and of people's contribution in money, materials and labour. These targets also demonstrated the relative freedom of choice of the villagers. Sometimes they preferred to put up buildings, such as panchayat houses, which were imposing according to village standards and therefore a source of pride when finished, but could be criticized on the grounds of extravagant expenditure and a lack of understanding of real priorities.

265. In the Community Development Report 1958-59 the greater part of the "construction" type of village amenities are dealt with under the heading of rural health and sanitation, and communications. The latter include feeder roads and the building of culverts; rural sanitation includes paving village lanes, constructing street drains, constructing or renovating drinking water wells, building public or private latrines and smokeless cooking stoves.

266. The problem of choice of targets with respect to these and other village amenities is worth studying, because no one at present knows whether the suggestions of the village level worker and the block officials dominated village decisions, or whether the villagers overrode the suggestions of officials and put their time and money into an object they themselves very much wanted. It is easy to criticize the expenditure on a handsome panchayat house or the shining steel equipment of a children's playground in terms of priorities. It is on the other hand, difficult to determine, without careful research, how far such "extravagant" spending has lifted the village to a new plane and made its inhabitants aware of their own potential in effort and expenditure. Studies, such as the attitude survey carried out by the Institute of Public Administration of Patna University in 1957, suggest that there is a new attitude among villagers which is exemplified by efforts to overcome the limitations of their present environment.

(i) Village housing and replanning.

267. In the course of its visits to villages, the Mission gained the impression that not only are public community facilities being built in increasing numbers of villages, but private houses are being built in more prosperous rural areas. On the whole, however, they show a low technical standard and an unnecessary waste of material, which could have been avoided through knowledge of the progress made in contemporary tropical architecture. Many of these buildings could be combined in one larger unit, even if it were built by stages. For example, a good school building might serve as a community centre and a place for panchayat meetings. This tendency to combine in one building the social activities of a small town or village is, for economic reasons, a pronounced one in advanced countries, and it was striking in India to note the extent of expenditure on separate buildings, even in obviously poor villages. Further more, the newly erected private housing lacks even modest improvements (such as latrines, cooking stoves) which might easily be incorporated if some guidance was given.

268. The Rural Housing Cell, established in the Ministry of Works, has produced a draft manual of rural housing which is displayed in some block information centres and libraries, but is not, apparently, much used by people who build community facilities and houses. A few score of villages were assisted by this Cell in rebuilding their premises. At the end of 1957, the Government introduced a Village Housing Project Scheme on an aided self-help basis in selected villages in community development blocks. Long-term loans amounting to 50 per cent. of the cost of construction (subject to a maximum of Rs. 1,500 per house) are provided to beneficiaries by the Government on the assumption that the people would provide another 50 per cent in cash, kind and labour. This scheme envisages the development of housing projects in 5,000 selected villages during the Second Five-Year Plan, but progress seems to be slow. At present, states are being encouraged to create rural housing cells in their governments.

269. Much more thought and effort are needed in this field, particularly in terms of technical assistance and guidance to people, the production of blue-prints of standard community facilities of various kinds and of plans for private houses, and more experimentation with better building materials.

270. The contrast between some tropical countries where contemporary architecture is well adapted to climatic conditions by providing plenty of air, free space, good lighting, etc., and some of the buildings, both old and new, in Indian villages, is particularly striking. Foreign aid can play a much greater role in this field than it does at present and young Indian Architects should be taken in greater numbers to other Asian countries and to Africa to study tropical architecture. Foreign experts and model equipment should be used on a much larger scale than hitherto to make an impact on village housing and planning. There is no better way of teaching people the meaning of the concept of planning than rebuilding a village, involving them from the beginning in discussion, planning and aided self-help activities. Some persons with whom this subject was discussed said that villagers consider housing a low priority, but there was also considerable evidence to the contrary. There are, in addition, many villages which are being resettled or rebuilt as a result of floods and other natural catastrophes and of movement from unhealthy sites. In some areas as much as 50 per cent of private houses are being rebuilt. One of the reasons why the Mission has emphasized this question is that a considerable saving of building materials can be achieved by technical improvements in the construction of housing and community facilities—particularly school buildings—in rural areas.

(j) WOMEN AND VILLAGE PROGRAMMES.

271. The Mehta Report recommended that a single authority in each State be in charge of the administration, planning and supervision of women's programmes. The Mission endorses this recommendation. It seems to be clear that all states should proceed to establish a women's welfare department wherever it does not already exist. The main advantage in having such a department is that it could be in direct relation with other departments which have an interest in women's programmes, such as community development, health, education and agriculture. According to the Community Development Report 1958-59, three States already have women's welfare departments with a woman director at the head. Seven states have a woman officer in charge of women's

programmes at the state level. The position of a chief woman officer without the backing of a department is not fully effective in the general system of Indian administration. In the long run, such a department may work itself out of a job and become as unnecessary as it would now be in many countries where women's needs and interests are more readily acknowledged and integrated in all spheres of national life.

272. For the present, however, there is an overwhelming need for a strong department in each state which can push ahead with women's programmes, especially in the villages. The pace of progress will inevitably vary in different areas according to the general level of education and the social patterns of the community. Much time, money, personnel and effort have already been put into women's programmes, both through the community development movement and through voluntary organizations, partly supported by state funds, such as the state social welfare boards. While there is, in general, much to be said for the greater freedom to experiment in voluntary organizations, the initial pioneer effort is always in danger of turning into a fixed and almost stereotyped programme which does not alter with changing conditions.

273. It may, therefore, expedite the progress of women's work at the present if there is a women's welfare department in each state, drawing up a policy for women's work which will meet the needs of that State, allowing for variations within the State *e.g.* in tribal areas. Such a department would also give skilled and professional supervision to all women workers in the villages and, in the local training centres, adopt the plans put out by the Central Government for women's training as *gram sevikas* and as *mukhya sevikas,* (women social education organizers).

274. The Mehta Report also emphasized the need for a change in the content of women's programmes in the villages. It was a relief to find that certain doubts felt by the Mission about the present programme were confirmed by this report. There were also confirmed by a number of community development officers and other officials who had observed the tardy and patchwork results of women's programmes despite great efforts and expenditure. In one state, a group of younger women sent word to the community development officials that they were tired of knitting and embroidery in women's clubs and wanted to join, or establish their own, Young Farmers' Club and get help and instruction in their own roles in agriculture.

275. The Mehta Report contained proposals along similar lines. It recommended that women's programmes in the villages should concentrate on the care of cows, the preparation of kitchen gardens and the growing of vegetables, and poultry keeping on improved lines. Tailoring, knitting and embroidery, the Report said, were of economic value only if the goods made could easily be sold in a near-by market town or city. It appeared that the emphasis in most of the women's clubs was, in fact, on sewing and knitting for their own family and not for sale, especially where the women did not want to be identified with the caste group of tailors, whose livelihood was the making and selling of clothes.

276. There was, however, a real need for skilled instruction in mending clothes which was not being met in any of the women's clubs visited by the Mission. In some Maharashtra village homes, skillful work was

seen on bed quilts made from old saries stitched together in an attractive design. Indigenous skills of this kind could be developed to mend children's and other clothes, and could be studied where they exist and "exported" to areas where they are not now known.

277. It was quite clear that the existing women's clubs and village programmes covered two fairly distinct groups of women. One group belonged to the relatively few higher income level families who lad little or no need to earn money, but who enjoyed learning new skills, such as knitting, and cutting and making children's garments. The other, and much larger group, needed to learn some skill which they could put to use as an additional source of income for their families. Garments, whether knitted or tailored, had a very limited market in the villages, where the members of all but the well-to-do families had one or, at most, two such garments. As the novelty of learning a new skill wore off, the women who had learned it and wanted to earn money by it found that the immediate village market was quickly saturated and that they could only sell their products by making a journey, involving time and money, to the nearest town or waiting for the next big fair or festival in the neighbourhood.

278. In several states, the women were spinning cotton on the *kisan charkha,* and here and there on the four-spooled *ambar charkha*—a much more complicated machine, which needed careful instruction before it could be operated and had to remain out of action if it got out of order because no one in the village could repair it.

279. Cotton spinning, as a subsidiary source of income for women who were busy for more than half of their day in the household and in the fields, brought in from eight annas to one rupee per day. Even this small amount was worth working for in many households. With this strong ideological drive towards hand spinning, and the various Khadi organizations to support it, spinning as a home industry for women is likely to continue until some more remunerative occupation takes its place.

280. The need of women in the middle and low-income families to earn money is in direct relation to the attendance of children in school. The main reason for non-attendance in the primary schools is the very real necessity for children to earn a few annas, seldom more than four a day, to augment the family earnings. If the women can add four annas a day to what they earn at present, the children are more likely to be released to attend school. In all areas where compulsory school attendance is being considered as a serious and practicable measure, this question of the need of many families for a small daily cash income needs investigating.

281. In fact, the biggest contribution to the effectiveness of women's programmes in the villages would be a series of intensive depth studies, not extensive sampling, of the cash requirements of some of the middle and low-income families in areas where compulsory education is already planned. It is not an easy type of study to plan, but it is not at all impossible. It would, most likely, win the attention and co-operation of village families who want to send their children to school but do not see how they could feed and clothe the family without the few extra annas earned every day. These are straight socio-economic facts which no one knows and most people just make a guess at. Nowhere, however,

did the Mission find women workers and planners of women's programmes thinking in these terms.

282. There are, perhaps, two main aspects of women's programmes in Indian villages. One is that just mentioned: the need for teaching skills to women who must earn cash for the sake of their families. The other has also been referred to earlier and emphasizes the integration of the teaching of women with that of men with respect to the general improvement of the household premises, and of family life in terms of food, health and relationships between the age-groups and sexes. At some of the men's village leaders' camps, such subjects have been touched upon and in a less integrated fashion at some of the village women's camps. But the "little talks" given in women's clubs, on which the *gram sevikas* and the *mukhya sevikas* and the health visitors seem to spend so much time, have no plan behind them, and no visible integration with what might be called the over-all needs of the family and households. It is time these programmes stopped dealing superficially and piecemeal with serious and important subjects like family life and home management. It is time too that smokeless *chula* (stove) ceased to be the goal of endeavour in women's programmes.

283. Studies of the type made by Dr. Geldens of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of family and household life in two Uttar Pradesh villages will provide the basis for the main outlines of a new programme and suggest a realistic approach to improving home conditions which is lakcing today. It is not enough for *gram sevikas* in training, or any other person without experience in socio-economic studies, to go and "observe" village families, and then to learn at the training centre what are the ideal forms of household living as regards food, sanitation, "beautification" of the house, and so on. The Mission found that these *gram sevikas* and their instructors could rarely explain or enumerate any of the real problems in family living. They immediately talk about smokeless *chulas* and latrines, when the chief problems are not smoke but hard cash, and not so much dirt as general muddle. Indian village women so often have a sense of order and of at least superficial cleanliness, as one can see in some of the houses. But the rest have been overcome, as women are in many countries, by the pressing needs of feeding too a large family and just keeping things going, and the often-seen muddle is the result. Dr. Geldens pointed out in her study how much unnecessary movement from place to place and hunting for mislaid and scarce utensils was the pattern in the village homes she had lived in.

284. Family and household programmes designed to improve village conditions should, therefore, first be based on the economic conditions of the family, and on finding ways and means to improve the daily and seasonal diet. Secondly, they should be related to the actual patterns of family living and family relationships. Thirdly they should contemplate improvements in housing structure and the use of house space for the different domestic purposes.

285. The women workers who see the most realistic sides of women's life are often the medically trained women—doctors, nurses (when there are any), health visitors and midwives—and their services are universally asked for and made use of by village women. Although they have a clearly defined programme of their own to carry out and are always pressed for time, their experience and factual knowledge make them an essential element in any planning of women's programmes.

286. They could give valuable advice about the emphasis on the *balwadi* (kindergarten) in women's programmes. The *balwadi* which the Mission saw in the villages were of two distinct types. One was a nursery school for the children of higher-income families, where the children were well-dressed and appeared to be clean and relatively well-fed. They sang little songs and played with Montessori-type toys and used the expensive steel apparatus in the children's playground.

287. The other type was more of a creche, where older children who should have been in school brought the toddlers they were in charge of and other toddlers were dumped there by their mothers. In most of these creche-types of *balwadi*, the children had matted hair, snuffly noses, caked direct on their skin, grimy cloth round them; and they appeared listless and inactive possibly due to intestinal infections combined with malnutrition and anaemia.

288. In both types of *balwadi*, the *gram sevika* had to spend a great deal of her time, and the results of this part of her programme were by no means clear. It was said here and there that the children who went to the *balwadi* were more likely to attend school when they reached the age of six, and that the existence of a *balwadi* sent up the school attendance; it was, however, difficult to get any figures to prove this.

289. The *gram sevikas* in charge of the *balwadi* were not adequately trained to see that the first objective in such a creche should be to do something about the children's health and food. A woman doctor, after a series of visits to different types of *balwadis*, could advise on a suitable programme to make the time spent by the *gram sevika* more useful.

290. In addition to tending to the pre-school children's needs, women doctors, accompanied by health visitors (for whom this would be useful training), might visit homes and talk with village women, and help them to establish a realistic programme, which would take account of actual situation and thus, perhaps, produce results.

291. If the woman doctor at the Primary Health Centre could be released to make these investigations, and then hold a seminar for the health visitors, midwives and *gram sevikas* working in the block, the woman doctor might be able to supervise the kind of health teaching given to the village women which is at present spasmodic and often unrealistic. Secondly, in the course of seeing village women who came to the Primary Health Centre for ante-natal or post-natal advice, she would be able to find out from them how much of the health teaching given them in the villages they had understood, and revise her own programmes for teaching and supervision accordingly.

(k) Health improvement.

292. For most of India, it was through community development planning that health services began to reach into remote rural areas. Certain states, such as Mysore, and Bombay had had rural health services for a number of years. It was, however, the setting up of community development blocks and the placing of primary Health Centres at block headquarters which made village people aware of some near-by available services, instead of having to journey to the nearest town or district headquarters for advice and preliminary treatment. This was particularly true of the maternal and child health services. Pilot projects had been tried out before with the help of the World Health Organisation (WHO). When community development passed beyond the pilot project stage,

the maternal and child health units were absorbed in the Primary Health Centres.

(l) Primary Health Centres.

293. While every block in the country needs a Primary Health Centre, only 37 per cent of the blocks at present have such centres. The bottleneck to the expansion of these centres is, according to the Ministry of Health in Delhi, lack of trained personnel. The centres should be staffed by two doctors, a health visitor, a sanitarian and a public health nurse. To each of these centres should be attached three sub-centres, each staffed by a fully trained midwife.

294. On the question of staffing the Primary Health Centres, the Mehta Report said that "the eternal problem of rural medical relief in our country, the antipathy of the medical graduate to live and work in the villages, has not been solved to any extent". An equally tight bottleneck is the shortage of personnel to fill the essential role of the public health nurse, who in, so many countries, is the backbone of rural health programmes. Indian families of good standing have not yet, after all these years, got over their opposition to their daughters taking up nursing as a profession. As long as this is the prevalent attitude, people in the villages will be deprived of the medical help they need. Among others, attempts to establish a school health service in rural areas are, to a large extent, held up for want of public health nurses to work with the doctor and see that his advice is carried out by the families of the children for whom he recommends treatment.

295. The profession of health visitor seems to attract the educated girls from higher-caste families, and it is evident, from talks with directors of various health visitor training centres, that the health visitor is regarded as having a higher status than a nurse and for that reason there is a steady supply of girls coming forward for training.

296. One gap needs filling at once, while Primary Health Centres and the sub-centres attached cannot be fully staffed even when opened. The indigenous *dai* (midwife) is still employed by village women to assist them in childbirth. She is willing not only to deliver the child, but to clean up after the birth and handle cloths and mats and other equipment which is considered socially and ritually unclean. Much suffering to women and babies can be prevented if the *dai* is given a short training course to learn how to avoid sepsis and when to call the doctor. This kind of training, already in operation in some areas, should be rapidly extended.

(m) Financing of Primary Health Centres.

297. These centres were originally financed from funds allocated through the community development programme, both as regards buildings (which include staff quarters) and staff salaries. According to the revised community development programme (1958), departmental staff which were paid for by community development in blocks at stage I will, in stage II, be taken over by the departments concerned. The abolition of National Extension Service (NES) blocks and the reorganization of blocks into stages has meant that 1,500 stage I blocks now have to be provided with health services which were not included in the provision for NES blocks.

298. In some areas, the villagers have been so enthusiastic about the services provided in the Primary Health Centres that they have come forward with offers of voluntary labour to help build the centres.

The Central Ministry of Health said that the demand for maternity and child health services was far beyond the possibility of supplying either from the point of view of funds or personnel.

(n) A BALANCED HEALTH PROGRAMME.

299. There is no doubt that the chief desire of the rural people is to get access to more curative medical facilities, including maternity services. There are, however, many sides of village life in which an integrated health programme might arouse the people to do much for themselves and to acquire some rudimentary health education. The main elements in such a programme are:

(1) **A safe and protected drinking water supply:** All kinds of households in the villages have co-operated willingly in building and renovating drinking water wells. The provision of adequate near-by supplies of water for washing and other household purposes is also one of the prerequisites of greater personal and household cleanliness.

(2) **Housing and sanitation:** In the opinion of all health workers, these two aspects must be combined. Some model public latrines have been constructed on a very limited scale. While these are used and kept clean, they are rare, and the general opinion is that the use of latrines instead of the open fields can only be brought about by making latrines within the household premises. Only in one village did the Mission find public latrines which were being used and well maintained. They were adequate to meet the needs of the population and were kept clean as a result of men and women of all classes taking turns in looking after them.

This provision of latrines is inevitably connected with the construction of houses. There is not much evidence of planning and building village houses to allow for a latrine, for the disposal of waste water, for adequate ventilation, for proper storage and preparation of food, and for the avoidance of having cattle and buffaloes sharing the living space.

In village replanning and improvement there is great need for:

(a) Experiments in village housing and the formulation of plans for different types of houses, taking the above-mentioned needs into consideration. This was discussed more fully in an earlier context;

(b) Propaganda for the separate construction of cattle sheds, and the provision of supervision of cattle stalled away from their owners' houses.

(3) **Family planning and infant care:** Village women are beginning to ask about family planning, and the obstacles in the way of education on this topic seem to be fast disappearing. As proposed in the latest Community Development Report, such education has been linked into the maternity services. It can also be very well related to better care of the children before and after birth.

Some means, however, has to be found for the education of men, who do not make use of the Primary Health Centres as the women do. There is a good deal of significant research and investigation on the question of publicity for, and methods of, family planning, though much yet remains to be done.

Undoubtedly, the Central Government is making an effort to popularize family planning, but the results are not, so far, impressive. The Mission felt that the best and most effective methods of carrying out this national policy to reach the masses should be the subject of further study.

(4) **Food habits and diet:** Evidence in the villages with community development programmes and from medical personnel was very inconclusive about improvements in diet. There was however general agreement that:

(a) Meals were taken more regularly and more often in the majority of households;

(b) The use of vegetables had gone up slightly;

(c) The consumption of milk and milk products and of eggs had gone down in villages near a town where these commodities could command a good price, and were, therefore, sold.

300. There are dietary surveys which indicate general levels of consumption in relation to caloric intake, and to the constituents of the diet. Some more detailed household studies of actual food used in family meals in households of different economic levels, augmented by studies of optimum (in the eyes of the villagers) food consumption at feasts and similar special occasions, would give more factual information and, therefore, a more realistic approach on which to base teaching about diet. In areas where double-cropping is on the increase, and where vegetables are grown—even if mainly for marketing purposes—studies of changes in food consumption would also give a useful lead.

Chapter VI

THE PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSE

301. The present chapter covers the most difficult part of the evaluation requested by the Government of India: the extent and nature of the people's response to the community development programme and the evidence of changing attitudes. A mission consisting of foreigners is obviously at a considerable disadvantage in attempting to answer such questions, though they may perhaps be able to take an objective view of the changes to deeply desired by enlightened leadership and the Government of India. With respect to the problems inherent in this particular approach to the community development programme and its results, the Mission is more than ever indebted to those Indian leaders in all walks of life who gave so generously of their time and attention to the elucidation and discussion of the different facets of changing attitudes in Indian villages. The Mission has no doubt that changes are on the way, that some are evident already, and that, as a result, village people's expectations have been roused to demand new and better opportunities for themselves and their families.

302. The present chapter covers four major aspects of the problem:

(1) The channelling of people's participation through village institutions, and, in particular, through the panchayats;

(2) The contributions of villagers to community development programmes in the forms of labour, materials and cash;

(3) The particular responses and needs of two special groups: the scheduled castes and the tribes;

(4) Evidence of the change of attitudes among villagers and their expectations for the future.

A. Community Development and Village Institutions

303. The relation between the community development movement and village institutions was an important one at the time of the visit of the Mission. The Community Development Report 1958-59 ended with the following statement about village institutions:

> "The three basic village institutions, namely the Panchayat, the co-operative and the village school have been accepted as the primary means, and democratic decentralisation as the national policy, for the promotion of socio-economic development in the villages. Hitherto, the emphasis in the programme was in securing efficient administration, ensuring proper co-ordination, arranging for the requisite training of the personnel, and providing necessary funds for promoting 'local work' schemes.

> "The next step is to vitalise the basic institutions in the village and make them responsible both for planning and for execution. These village institutions have their own problems, which have grown over the past 2,000 years.

"It will be the task of this Ministry and all those engaged in the programme, be they officials or non-officials, to grapple with them and carry the torch further into the countryside."

1. *Studies of panchayats.*

304. The Mission made use of several earlier studies on the nature and function of the panchayat as the main village institution. Some of these studies dealt directly with the question of panchayats, as in the case of the study which formed part of the Fifth Evaluation Report of the Planning Commission. Others formed part of special surveys on the operation of community development projects; others again were part of general sociological studies of Indian villages.

305. Studies in this last group were particularly useful in elucidating what the Community Development Report quoted above referred to as "the age-old problems inherent in Indian village institutions". The relations between caste panchayats, judicial panchayats and the newer form of statutory panchayats must be reviewed before the present-day function of the panchayat in promoting development can be fully understood.

306. Meeting a panchayat group, or some members of it, in a village, and being aware of their part in organizing an official reception, and seeing the visible evidence of their leadership in the form of new buildings, paved streets, walls and so on, does not necessarily convey the full import of the place of the panchayat in village affairs. It was not always evident that all sections of village society were present at village meetings. Inquiries sometimes brought out the fact that Harijans (scheduled castes) were not present and did not as a rule, in spite of having a reserved place in the membership, take part in regular panchayat meetings. In order to understand how representative the panchayat is, the Mission had to review on the one hand, the evolution of the present statutory panchayats, and, on the other hand, the composition of village groups of all kinds.

(a) THE EVOLUTION OF STATUTORY PANCHAYATS.

307. The Planning Commission's Fifth Evaluation Report contains a brief history of the present statutory panchayats, pointing out that the development of panchayats has varied in different parts of India. In Madras, Bombay and Mysore, statutory panchayats have existed for the past thirty years, but only in a limited number of villages and with a limited range of functions.

308. It was also a Directive Principle of State Policy of the Indian Constitution that:

"The State shall take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such power and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government."

309. Under the Second Five-Year Plan, the scope of the panchayats was extended from being a unit of self-government to also being a unit of development.

"Rural progress depends entirely on the existence of an active organisation in the village which can bring all the people—including the weaker sections mentioned above—into common programmes to be carried out with the assistance of the administration."

310. It is this association—in concept at any rate—of all sections of the village population with the panchayat on the one hand and with development programmes on the other, which makes this central village institution a fundamental element in the people's participation in community development.

311. All states now have statutory provision for setting up panchayats, and in the Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa they are actively at work in most areas of the state concerned. There are variations, however, between states, and within different parts of each state, in respect of the financial resources available to panchayats, their responsibility for development and administration, and the official staff whose duty it is to guide and supervise their work.

(b) ASSESSMENT OF PANCHAYATS, MEMBERSHIP AND FUNCTIONS.

312. The Mission therefore had to study the official policy of the Central Government in respect of the functions of panchayats and the evaluation of studies which had been made, and also to question state officials and informal advisory committees at the state level, and block advisory committees, about the role of panchayats, particularly in their support of, or initiative for, development plans at the village level.

313. It was impossible under the conditions of a village reception for the Mission to arrive at any judgements on the actual functioning of the panchayat. Only a few inquiries could be made about the membership of the panchayat; whether it represented all sections of the village or only the leading farmers, with the required reserved places for women and for Harijans; and whether the panchayat was on the whole popular and respected in the village community.

314. There was little doubt that the membership of the panchayat lay chiefly among the larger landowners—the richer element in the village population—who commanded respect because of their caste and their family connections, and also because they were relatively well-to-do, and who were interested in development because it would increase their income. This impression is confirmed by the study of panchayats in the Fifth Evaluation Report of the Planning Commission, and by a more detailed study in Uttar Pradesh which dealt with village leadership and interest in development plans and projects. Other village studies have shown that many villagers voting in elections for a new panchayat had only a vague little idea of why it was being formed.

315. Not only did the panchayat membership chiefly consist of well-to-do farmers and the higher caste groups, it was also a predominantly older group, following the traditional pattern of Indian society. This was evident at almost all meetings of panchayats attended by the Mission—an impression that was confirmed by the Fifth Evaluation Report study already referred to. In the areas covered by that study, only 1 · 1 per cent of panchayat members were under 25 years of age, and only 38 · 9 per cent were betwen 25 and 40 years, the balance of 60 per cent being in the older group.

316. Another important aspect of panchayat functions to which the Mission gave considerable attention was that of the financial resources of panchayats. These varied greatly from state to state, and within states. In the study contained in the Fifth Evaluation Report, the resources of

the panchayats were given under the headings of local taxes of various kinds, and income received from village common land, fisheries, etc.; government grants, both regular and from block development funds; and *ad hoc* contributions by the people for specific projects, though these last were not always put into the hands of the panchayat.[34]

317. The Mission considers that the panchayat is so important in laying the foundations of village self-government, that it should be able to rely to an increasing extent on its own activities for the welfare of the community. In order to do this adequately, it should be able to count on more revenue from money raised locally. This might partly be met by a review of the proportion returned to the panchayat from its collection of land or revenue taxes, where these powers exist. The Mission suggests that the states might consider returning to the panchayats a larger percentage of funds from this source.

(c) New development functions.

318. It is clear that the village panchayat, whatever its future relations to the co-operative society or societies in the village may be, will have to be helped and guided in its new role, which adds development activities to those of local self-government. There is, perhaps, need for a certain caution in using the latter phrase in an Indian village setting. Local self-government has a modern sound, and almost an urban connotation, and conjures up images of health committees, education committees, paid secretaries and inspectors and so forth.

319. Indian village life is still in one sense very informal, while in another sense it has always been very highly and intricately organized. There does not appear to be any easy transition from the hookah groups (North India), the kinship and caste groups, the casual discussions on the platform under a tree, the occasional bursts of energy to repair a temple or to organize a festival, to the inevitable day-to-day continuous responsibility for village cleaning, the school premises, the culvert under the feeder road, and so on.

(i) *Panchayat and total village plans.*

320. One of the problems of which community development workers have to be aware is centred in what, for want of a better term, can be called the village community, especially where that community consists

34/ The Programme Evaluation Organization found in its study of panchayats that the annual *per capita* income of panchayats varied from Rs. 3 to Rs. 0·17. This situation is caused not only by inadequate resources, but general inefficiency in the collection of taxes and fees and general reluctance of panchayats to impose new taxes or collect existing ones more vigorously. The *ad hoc* contributions raised from people were much larger than those made by panchayats and only those local government units which possess some property (land, ponds and lakes, etc.) seem to be better off and more willing to engage in development activities. The extent of poverty of panchayats is indicated not only by the present status of their income, but also by their potentialities. The study made in 1958 in Madras by a committee under V. K. Ramaswami Mudaliar [*Perspective Budget of Panchayat Administration. Report of the Local Finance Sub-Committee of the Legislature Committee on Local Administration*, Madras, 1958.] indicated that it will take at least 3 years for panchayat administration to be set up in all blocks and approximately 5 years to step up its expenditure level. This target level combining all possible taxes and government education grants (on elementary education) would yield an aggregate income of Rs. 6·0 (approx. $US1:16) *per capita* annually, as compared to the level of expenditure for 1956/7 of approx. Rs. 1·7 out of grants and local income.

of a number of different caste groups all living within a village nucleus. and not in separate hamlets. Planners and administrators sometimes talk of the village as though it were, for all purposes, a self-conscious and integrated and homogeneous group. A closer examination, however, of the ways in which decisions are made and agreement obtained for certain common village activities, brings out the relationship of the panchayat to the total village community as well as to the richer and more influential groups within the village. The Ffth Evaluation Report study went into the question of whether villagers thought the panchayat was useful or not and also the village attitude towards taxes levied by the panchayat. Other studies have also focused on the attitudes of villagers towards their panchayat. On the whole, village attitude towards their panchayats seem to be favourable. In one Uttar Pradesh study, the percentage of small-scale farmers approving of the panchayat was greater than that of large-scale farmers—a reflection possibly of the impact of factions among the larger landowners on elections for panchayat membership.

321. It seems, therefore, from observations made by the Mission, from discussions with officials and non-officials, and from the village studies referred to, that at present the panchayat is accepted as a representative body for the village, elected by them, though with a preponderance of richer and older influential members.

322. In this new responsibility for planning and development at the village level, the support which the panchayat can count on for its decisions will depend upon the respect and co-operation of all the villagers. Here the genuine village community feeling can be called into service where it exists, and strengthened. But in the long run, there will have to be some balance of advantages between the richer landowners, having a majority on the panchayats, and the group consisting of the smallest farmers, artisans and landless labourers who, as a rule, constitute more than 50 per cent of the total village population.[35]

323. Some fears have been expressed by the village people to research personnel conducting village studies that the panchayat will develop into a privileged group, with an increasing amount of power—all power, in fact, in their hands. It may appear that the basis of election by universal adult suffrage gives an opportunity for the villages to elect whom they will. In fact, the predominance of group politics and factions, and the identification of villagers at all levels with these factions, often causes the results of the elections to reflect these divisions of the village into rival groups.

324. This is one great obstacle to the democratic functioning of the panchayat in the interest of the whole village. Another is the lack of education among panchayat members which the Fifth Evaluation Report study showed clearly. Villagers appear more inclined to trust educated men, even if they are known to be faction leaders.

325. A different type of obstacle to the democratic functioning of the panchayat lies in the general official and administrative reliance on a too narrow concept of democratic procedure. As more than one social scientist has pointed out, majority decisions are not popular in Indian

35/ The studies already referred to divide village populations into large-scale, medium-scale and small-scale farmers, artisans, and landless labourers.

village life. That is not the pattern of their decision making, any more than it is in many other rural societies throughout the world. Important decisions, which are expected to have wide-spread support, are the result of long discussions, leading to a virtually unanimous conclusion. This is one of the reasons why unpopular decisions are often shelved and no action is taken.

326. There are reserved places in the panchayat membership for one woman and one member of the Harijan group. Although it may be an innovation in village society to put a woman on the panchayat, the Mission suggests that it might be a more effective change if two women's places were to be reserved. They could then support each other at panchayat meetings instead of, as is often the case, being afraid to turn up alone, and would encourage each other in putting forward the views of different groups of women about proposed development plans.

327. In view of the importance of the potential future contribution of young people to social and economic change in the village, the Mission suggests that one place should be reserved for a member of a youth club, if it is representative of a wide range of younger adults in the village. If not, it might be better to select a young man under 25 who is respected because of his education, his general character and his willingness to take part in village services.

328. The panchayats are to be charged with making development plans at the village level. These include agricultural plans for the use of private and public lands, for minor irrigation works, and for the improvement of cattle and other livestock—in fact, all the plans discussed in Chapter IV above. Other plans are related to village amenities, such as roads, wells, drains, schools and public buildings of several kinds. The latter are likely to benefit more people in the village than the former, and will for that reason win more support from the artisans and landless labourers. This balance between plans for production and plans for village improvement on other, non-agricultural, lines is vital not only to each village but to the states and to India as a whole, since, as shown in Chapter IV above, increased agricultural production is essential for financing all social services.

(ii) *Training of panchayat members and secretaries*

329. The panchayat as a group will need careful and persistent training in these important new aspects of their responsibilities, as was mentioned under the section on social education in Chapter V above.

330. In most urban councils, there are sub-committees to take care of different aspects of public interest, such as roads, lighting, public health, education and so on. Most existing panchayats are not so constituted that they can easily break up into such sub-committees. Many of them have been so recently set up that, in fact, they need to learn to work together as a group and to take a total village view of development and not a sectional one, either by subject matter, or according to group interests.

331. It would be useful, however, to follow the example of one voluntary village improvement agency: to elect or appoint individual panchayat members to be responsible respectively, for promoting health measures, night schools, village cleaning roads, and so on. Village

leaders' camps with short training courses in these different aspects of the development of new amenities and maintenance of old ones would give members of the panchayat a grasp of certain principles and methods of promoting these common village interests. This type of course has been carried out successfully in community development work in several other countries.

332. In addition to these proposed courses for panchayat members, courses for training full-time panchayat secretaries are also needed. Full-time appointments to that post have been made in several states in certain areas, and training courses, varying in length from three weeks to six months, are already in operation.

B. Village Contributions to Community Development Programmes.

333. During many discussions with panchayats, the Mission was impressed, as noted earlier, by the lack of financial resources in the village itself to carry out necessary public works. The Mission was aware of the considerable efforts made under the first Five-Year Plan, and to some extent under the second Five-Year Plan, to achieve certain targets through voluntary contributions. These had taken the form of cash, or gifts of land or labour. The work done voluntarily was reckoned in man-hours and the whole converted into cash in the block statements about village achievements. For a number of reasons, this element of voluntary contribution by villagers had lost its original appeal. Rich farmers had given land for schools and other community buildings, but, as the Mehta Report pointed out, there was, in some states and some blocks, a tendency to inflate the cash value of the people's contribution, whether it was in land, materials, money or labour. The Mission would support the suggestion in the Report that a more uniform and realistic method of assessment should be adopted, partly in order to show more clearly the balance between panchayat taxes and other resources, the people's direct contribution, and grants from the Government. In some villages, where a connecting road or a minor irrigation or drainage canal was an obvious need, the Mission was told that the work would have to await a Government grant. It seems clear that villages in stage II blocks will have to reconsider their whole financial responsibility for further planning and development.

334. Another point made by the Mehta Report, with which the Mission is in full agreement, concerns the unequal participation by different sections of the village community. The richer farmers gave land and money. When the landless labourer gave a day's work freely, he lost the possibility of a day's pay and therefore a day's food. For people living so close to the margin of subsistence, that kind of sacrifice is probably not justified, and another suggestion for meeting this difficulty was made in Chapter IV. This proposal recognized that the poorest members of the village group who had no land, and therefore no food supply which they had grown themselves to fall back on, could work out their labour tax, or give certain days to voluntary work, if they received food during the days they were so working. Certainly about today's and tomorrow's food is the dominating need among the poorest sections of village populations.

335. In the blocks studied by the Mehta Committee, the proportion of villagers who participated in community works was found to be as follows:—

Small-scale farmers ..	29 per cent.
Medium-scale farmers ..	27 per cent.
Landless labourers ..	11 per cent.
Large-scale farmers ..	7 per cent.

336. In this connexion, the findings of the attitude survey carried out by the Institute of Public Administration at Patna are perhaps significant. These showed that people in the higher income levels thought that community development was a people's programme, while those in the lower income groups thought that the programme was due to official activity. Occasionally, comments were made to the Mission about the doubtful "voluntary" contribution of labour to community works on the part of the landless labourer class. This view of the unequal impact of voluntary contributions was confirmed by a study by a social scientist in which the lower caste groups in the villages studied laid more stress on the need to improve their economic conditions than on the need to abolish caste differences.

C. Special Groups.

1. *Scheduled Castes*

337. The Mission was aware of the very sharp challenge to the new democracy in India caused by the existence in most villages of a separate quarter for Harijans which implied separation in other than a spatial sense. The Mission was also aware of the efforts made through earmarked financial assistance to blocks to improve the living quarters of the Harijan group. This sometimes took the form of rehousing, and it was almost invariably associated with making a safe drinking water well for use by the Harijans. Many of the Harijan houses, whether new or old, were kept particularly neat and clean, and panchayat members and others sometimes commented on the contrast between Harijan quarters and the rest of the village.

338. The plans to build new Harijan colonies away from the main village sometimes resulted in better, more widely spaced houses. There was not, as a rule, enough space for a vegetable garden of any adequate size to assist in feeding the family. The most serious criticism by Harijans of these new quarters was the distance they had to travel to their old employment as labourers, and the difficulty of finding any new paid work in the neighbourhood of the colony.

339. The assistance given to Harijan children who attended school in the form of free slates and books was much welcomed by the families who could spare one child to go to school. In the primary school, these children appeared to take their place among the rest without being made conscious of their caste status. The Mission is of the opinion that the primary school might prove to be one of the most potent influences in removing the social stigma from this group of villagers.

2. *Scheduled tribes*

340. The only state in which it was possible to get both an over-all and a first hand view of community development work among scheduled tribes was in Bihar. Discussions were held, however, in Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Bombay with individuals and groups working in tribal areas, the former mainly on research projects, the groups mainly on service programmes.

341. In the Chota Nagpur division of Bihar it was possible to see a multi-purpose block at work. This is the name given to blocks in which the Ministries of Home Affairs and of Community Development collaborate with the state government in financing a community development programme. Eight such blocks were in operation in Bihar, and thirty-five in eight other states. The present allocation from the Central Government is 2·7 million rupees per block.

342. The purpose of this complementary financing from central funds to assist the state allocation is to overcome, in the initial stages of community development work, some of the chief obstacles to progress in tribal areas. These obstacles are partly due to the geographical isolation and, hence, difficulty of access in many tribal areas which are situated in mountainous and forest country. Other obstacles to progress are health conditions, including the prevalence of malaria, yaws and tuberculosis, as well as educational backwardness and the low economic levels of living due to a poor subsistence economy.

343. Not all tribal areas are, however, so backward. In parts of Chota Nagpur and of the Assam hill areas, missionary education activities among tribal peoples have resulted in tribal men, and particularly tribal women, being available for the service of their own people in community development and other welfare programmes. The women, who suffer no restrictions on religious or social grounds, take an active part in village affairs and show an interest in all aspects of village programmes.

(a) Tribal response to Community Development

344. In interviews with the State Community Development Advisory Committee in Patna, statements were made such as: "Community Development is the best gate for tribal peoples to come through"; "the tribal peoples have come from the hills to embrace community development"; "the community development programme has created among tribal peoples a zeal, which they have never shown before, to come forward and to co-operate in their own improvement".

345. Among the tribal peoples can be found every stage of community development achievement and of co-operation from the people, ranging from the educated leadership of women in the Assam hills and in Chota Nagpur, to the bewildered attempts at adjustment by nomadic forest tribes who have been resettled in permanent villages by the state government.

346. The response to community development programmes was observed in several Chota Nagpur villages as well as at a block headquarters. In some villages, a programme was already in operation; in

others it had not yet begun. The particular craft skills of different tribes are being developed, as a well-arranged small exhibition at the block headquarters demonstrated. In one small resettled village of forest nomads, the school teacher combined the roles of teacher, village level worker and social education officer, while the people, still not fully accepting their new role, depended on him for advice regarding all their needs.

(b) STAFF FOR TRIBAL AREAS

347. The major problem of community development programmes in any tribal area is, with few exceptions, the lack of suitable trained personnel to serve as village level workers and block officers. Living conditions are hard; amenities such as education for their children are poor; community development personnel do not know the language and thus cannot easily communicate with tribal groups; and many of them have an almost fearful aversion to being associated with people who fit into no known pattern of social organization and of economic and religious practices.

348. It is partly due to this difficulty in recruiting suitable workers for official community development programmes that the co-operation of several unofficial bodies has been welcomed by the state governments. The staff of these welfare societies are recognized as having a kind of missionary zeal which enables them to put up with the real physical hardships and other drawbacks to living and working in tribal areas. In a number of instances, their work is recognized by the state government and assisted by grants-in-aid.

(c) INTEGRATED FAMILY APPROACH

349. The situation in the multi-purpose blocks in tribal areas offers special opportunities for carrying out family and household improvement projects, provided that workers can be recruited. Among some tribal groups, there already are high standards of cleanliness and order in the home. The women are interested in the possibilities of adding to the family income by raising poultry and growing vegetables, and by improving their traditional crafts in order to sell their handiwork at fairs in neighbouring towns.

350. The women can also be counted on to take an active interest and part in village improvement schemes, and often to lead the men in adopting new measures for the benefit of the whole community. Road building, construction of wells, improved agriculture, school attendance, all fall within the women's interests, and they are asking for more facilities for medical care for their families.

351. Panchayats, or some traditional form of village council, are to be officially encouraged in tribal villages, and women will play no small part in their deliberations and decisions. The Mission would like to see due recognition given to women's role in tribal societies in places on the panchayat or council, where they might have a 50 per cent. representation.

(d) Preliminary surveys and continuous studies

352. The Central Government and the Tribal Research Institutes have emphasized the importance of a thorough survey before a new block is opened in tribal areas. Such a survey should not only focus, as suggested, on local economic conditions, but also on the patterns of social grouping in the villages, and the relative roles played by age and sex groups. These preliminary surveys should be followed by intensive studies of selected areas in order to test the suitability of the community development programme for the particular economic conditions and social patterns of living, but also in order to establish the ways in which decisions are made in the community, and the success or failure of methods of communication between officials and the village population.

353. If some of the non-official agencies invited to share community development programmes could produce workers suitable for training in the field of anthropology and social change, they might provide possible personnel for this type of continuous evaluation.

D. Change in People's Attitudes

354. The criteria for determining changes in attitudes due to political, social and economic development are still barely formulated in developed countries, where questionnaires can be used with some measure of confidence, and where interview techniques assume some common ground between the interviewer and his subjects. In the great variety of social and economic conditions in rural India, questionnaires seem of doubtful reliability and interviews are hampered by the wide gulf in education and standard of living between the college-trained interviewer and the illiterate farmer.

355. Nevertheless, both questionnaires and interviews have been employed in rural India, notably in the evaluation studies referred to. In some villages, the Mission was able, through a carefully worked-out list of topics, to get small groups of villagers to discuss their attitudes towards changes in their village and to express their hopes for the future.

356. The study made in Uttar Pradesh under the auspices of the Planning Research and Action Institute of Lucknow, to which reference has been made earlier, was able to compare attitudes among villagers in community development blocks and in blocks where community development had not been introduced. Two significant findings are worth mentioning here, because they show a departure from traditional ways of thinking which is of great importance for India's future. One was that, in community development blocks, farming families were reducing their expenditure on ceremonial occasions, such as weddings, and were, instead, putting money into improvements of their land and farms. That change was borne out by the Mission's observations in Bihar, where surplus cash and short-term loans were being invested in farm improvements of all kinds, including electric pumps for irrigation paid for on the instalment plan.

357. The other change was in the indices by which villagers judged a man's status, and, in particular, how a man would be able to increase his status. Villagers agreed that nowadays a man would gain in status in three ways: By having a larger income; by being consistently generous in offering hospitality; and by educating all his children.

358. The Attitude Survey of the Institute of Public Administration at Patna already referred to came to the following conclusions on changing attitudes: All sections of the population welcomed the new village amenities, such as drinking water wells, better schools and the health programmes. The community development officials were now turned to by the villagers for help in any kind of need—medical, agricultural, veterinary; and the contact with community development officials had made the people no longer afraid of approaching government officials with their problems. In the social sphere, changes were slower than in economic life, but village families were now sending their girls to school and early marriages were on the decline.

359. At a meeting of more than 500 farmers in Bihar, one farmer said: "Today we are working in the fierce light of change"; and another said, "we have seen a great ferment among the people". A third farmer, who had been given a medal for the best improvements on his land, took it off his shirt and pinned it on that of a Harijan who was one of his labourers, saying, "It is this man who works for me who has made my land so good".

360. In the course of the Mission's direct contact with small groups of villagers, it was found that their expectations for the future were a direct result of a change of attitude due to the improved conditions in their own village or in neighbouring villages which they had visited. The villagers, having become aware of the possibility of getting rid of age-long burdens, such as the toll of malaria or the lack of water for irrigation, were stretching themselves and looking ahead.

361. Some of their expectations could be realized by their own efforts, but, in general, they needed the government help. For instance, they could, by their own efforts, add new rooms to the primary school building. They could enforce compulsory attendance at school and devise methods by which the work done by children on farms could be replaced. But for the additional teachers needed, the education department concerned had to provide funds to recruit and train teachers and guarantee their salaries. The villagers could co-operate with DDT campaigns and recognize the benefits of malaria control; they could co-operate with vaccination and inoculation campaigns and recognize their new immunity from small-pox and cholera. But the increasing desire for medical treatment and advice expressed by the villagers and confirmed by the medical personnel depended on the ability of the relevant medical department to find money and personnel to extend the existing services.

362. The main obstacle to these extended services, namely, the inability of state and Central funds to meet the demand, had not been grasped by the villagers, except in terms of a flat refusal because all the budget provisions were already committed. A vital link in the financial sphere between greater production, increased taxes and, hence, more funds for welfare services, had not been understood by most villagers. There was an essential element in their education as adult citizens which was missing here. If their expectations appeared unrealistic, it was partly because those who were guiding them had not looked ahead and grasped the importance and possibility of some rudimentary economic teaching for the leaders in village society. Unless this can be done, there may be real frustration in the progressive elements in village

society, and signs of this frustration were already evident in some of the village discussions.

363. Foremost among the expectations of the villagers interviewed was the desire for more and better educational facilities for their children. Where there were already adequate primary school facilities in the village, they were looking ahead to better facilities for post-primary education, both in middle school and in high school. There was very little discussion among the villagers about the value of agri cultural technical education at the high school level. They had apparently never connected the importance of technical education with the need to repair simple machinery, water pumps or radios in the village. Their enthusiasm for these newer and more exciting forms of change might be harnessed to an emphasis on technical education as opposed to a purely clerical and academic form of schooling.

364. For much the same long-term reasons, to overcome physical disabilities and privations due to disease, the villagers want more extensive and better health services. Many villagers, as a result of medical services already rendered, are emerging from a fatalistic attitude towards disease. They like to come to the Primary Health Centre to talk about their ailments, whether serious or slight, and to receive treatment. A few medical personnel interpreted this as a "superstitious belief in injections". Others, who were perhaps more able or willing to see the trend of events, recognized that many illiterate village people had reached a new stage of acceptance of medical services and were almost, if not quite, ready to adopt a "cause and effect" belief about disease. The desire to talk with medical personnel about their illness or their health was probably rightly interpreted as a sign of this new attitude, on which could be built a firm structure of preventive medicine and public health in rural areas.

365. In all village discussions, there was a clamorous demand for more assistance in agriculture and irrigation. One village group of farmers in Uttar Pradesh, when asked what were the things most needed in their villages, replied: "the first, second, third need is (better) cultivation, that is all". Impatience was shown when the supply of fertilizer ran out. Where it had not been satisfied, there was a continuing demand for better seeds and for insecticides to control pests. In advanced areas, such as Saurashtra, there was a demand for more tractors and a hope expressed that India would soon achieve full production of its own tractors.

366. The expectations aroused by the possibilities of double cropping led to increased demands for irrigation in many villages. The old bondage of dependence on monsoon rains was slowly losing its shackles. Some of the villagers showed that they realized that the maintenance of irrigation channels and the control of water was going to lead to much more work on their farms. But there was no hint of dismay at this prospect. On the contrary, the prospect of new cash income from crops, and more demands on their organizing of man labour, cattle labour and water facilities had evidently a stimulating effect.

367. The effect of certain kinds of target achievement in village amenities was to stimulate expectations in all directions of village improvement—housing, wells, paved lanes, public village buildings, and,

above all, electricity, where it was not too remote to be part of village hopes.

368. The women were, on the whole, more modest and less ambitious in their expectations. Due, perhaps, to certain emphases in women's programmes, they limited their ideas to acquiring new skills, such as embroidery and tailoring and, when possible, making or at least saving money by making garments for sale or for their families. Those working in the fields with their husbands found it difficult to see beyond their daily routine. Here and there were village women who seemed to be in control of their household situation instead of being slaves to it. They knew that they wanted a near-by water supply most of all; more space in the working part of the house instead of its being choked up with buffaloes and sacks of grain or cotton; more advice and help regarding their children's illnesses; and some kind of amusement or entertainment to lighten the dull atmosphere of their village lives.

369. The youths—and there always seemed to be two or three in every village group interviewed—had very definite ideas about what they and the boys of their own age group wanted. They were mildly amused at being asked their opinion and not always at ease in expressing themselves in front of their elders.

370. The youths invariably hoped for better chances of schooling, most of them having completed primary school and not having been able to go on to middle school or high school through lack of money for fees or the need for their help on the family farms. After education came a desire for better clothes and "better houses to live in". They were enthusiastic about the need for sports equipment—footballs, volley balls, etc.,—and for more reading facilities in a library or reading room with good lighting and a good selection of books and papers and, if possible, a radio. Several groups said that they wanted musical instruments to form a band and to play on various occasions and, generally, to brighten up village life.

Chapter VII

TRAINING

A. The Role of Training in Community Development

371. Probably no single aspect of community development work in India has received more attention than the need for, and the way to carry out, training schemes. To this keen interest has been added expert advice and personnel through international and foreign aid. Other countries, less advanced than India in establishing a community development movement to raise standards of living in rural areas, will find the history and development of training schemes in India, even over the short period since the first projects began, of great value in establishing their own schemes. No small part of the value will lie in examining the criticism and evaluation of training schemes by Indian and foreign experts.

372. There has, at times, been a certain tendency to say that everything depends on training. Fortunately that is not wholly true, for, as already noted, some of the most penetrating and constructive thinking about community development has come from people who have not had any specific "training" in this field. That is at the top level; at the village level some of the people are beginning to realize—also without training—that their old institutions can be revitalized and new ways of living tried out.

373. In the light of the discussion on community development and the people's share in it (Chapter VI) and the multi-purpose approach to village problems (Chapter V), the training schemes can be seen as an attempt to bridge the very wide gap between the mature, highly-skilled, far-seeing planners at the top and the young, unskilled, inexperienced village level worker at the bottom. The training courses can be regarded as one way—certainly an important one—of regulating and easing the lines of communication from the top to the village level.

374. Here, however, there is already evident some danger in regarding "training" as the way to solve all problems of communication, of attitudes and of action. Sometimes, whenever a new cadre is established or an old one re-shaped, or a new complex of problems is recognized, the tendency is to decide to set up a new kind of training centre, or to re-cast existing plans for training.

375. In the community development field, there are two distinct elements in most, though not in all, training schemes.

1. Extension training.

376. The young man just out of school who is recruited as a village level worker must, first of all, learn the basic skills of agriculture, and to master the technical and practical aspects sufficiently thoroughly to be able to hold his own alongside farmers with a lifetime's experience of cultivation. The length of the training in basic agriculture for the village level worker has been gradually extended since the early days,

when it was essential to get such workers quickly and in sufficient numbers. Today, Bihar has decided to give all village level workers a basic two years' course in agriculture for which they will receive a diploma, recognized as a step towards a full degree in agriculture if they should wish, at a later stage, to advance further up the professional ladder. To this basic two-years course will be added six months' training in extension methods.

377. Much thought has been given to the question whether extension methods, that is, the teaching of improved cultivation to farmers, should be combined with, or added to, the basic agricultural course for village level workers. At present, some basic agricultural schools where village level workers are trained have no extension training centre attached, and therefore this integration of teaching basic agricultural knowledge and extension methods is not possible.

378. This integration is also not possible everywhere at present for another reason. Extension methods cannot be taught in a classroom, except to a very limited extent. They must be taught and demonstrated in the fields and among the cattle and poultry. The extension wings of some agricultural schools include a block where the staff of the extension wing can advise on new methods and supervise their implementation by the village level workers who are in training alongside the farmers. There are, it is obvious, two types of demonstration open to extension wings, and both are necessary: One is on the experimental farm which is part of the agricultural school, and the other is in the adjoining block on the farmers' own lands.

379. Regardless of whether extension training is given after a basic agricultural course or is integrated with it, two things seem essential:

(1) The basic agricultural course should be of such a kind that the village level worker can feel that he has a foot on the ladder of possible professional advancement, and is not, through his training, being side-tracked into a blind alley for future employment;

(2) All extension wings of agricultural schools should be attached to at least one neighbouring block where village level workers can do practical work under realistic conditions and the extension staff can continually test and adjust their ways of teaching instructional methods. It has been said that the term "extension methods" is widely and readily used in India today, but there is considerable evidence that its meaning is not fully grasped, or at least not fully implemented in teaching or in practice.

380. The same conclusions about the basic teaching of skills and their relation to extension methods holds good for co-operative officers, for rural industries officers and for others who require a basis of technical skill in their community development work.

381. A criticism which has been made recently about the content of the course in extension training centres is that insufficient attention is paid to agricultural economics, and, in particular, to farm planning in its economic as well as in its land usage aspects. This would also seem to apply to the training of co-operative officers, for both they and the village level workers will have to grasp, as well as to explain to farmers,

the economic arguments for the greater use of co-operative methods in all aspects of farming.

2. Orientation training.

382. The second element in training is to get people to understand why they have been recruited to a community development staff, and what kind of outlook they are supposed to have in all community development work—in fact, to clarify what is, at the time of their recruitment, a somewhat vague assignment.

383. This is called "orientation", and several centres have been set up where a job training either precedes or follows an orientation course.

384. Orientation courses, if they are to be meaningful, should inculcate the new attitude towards the idea of community development which was referred to in Chapter V. The intention is to get the trainees, who may be newly recruited or already in service, to take a new look at what may seem to them an ordinary job of administration or of supervising some of the non-agricultural aspects of village level work.

385. Another, and perhaps the over-riding, emphasis in orientation training is to instil into the trainees that sense of urgency about working in the community development movement, which is perhaps absent from ordinary administration except at times of crisis, and is as a rule absent from supervision in a bureaucracy.

386. The task of the staff in the orientation training centres is not an easy one. They have six weeks in which to achieve what is probably one of the most difficult administrative and educational tasks anywhere. The majority of the trainees are from other administrative cadres, either "promoted" to being a block development officer or drafted from other divisions of the administration. Talks with the principals of these orientation training centres revealed that, as a rule, in each group, about 50 per cent of the trainees were already keen on their job, or willing to be made so; 25 per cent or rather more were indifferent at first, but often changed their attitude in the course of training; less than 25 per cent were not interested in their assignment and for the most part just "went through the motions" of the training course, hoping that they would soon be drafted out of community development. Since this orientation type of course cannot be put over effectively without the full co-operation of the trainees, the staff have a dual responsibility; to see that the enthusiastic 50 per cent plus get all that they are looking for and more; and to work at the "hard core" of indifferent and unwilling trainees so that as many as possible can be won over to play an intelligent if not an enthusiastic part in promoting community development.

387. In January 1959, there were six orientation training centres in the following states: Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra, Bihar and Mysore; and it was proposed to open two more in April 1959 in Bombay and Madhya Pradesh.

388. These orientation courses were for all officers at the block level, including social education organizers, both men and women. Longer courses of six months for male social education organizers and ten months for women social education officers were arranged at twelve centres, combining job and orientation courses.

(4) The staff used visual aids of every kind in their teaching. At many other training centres, trainees were taught about visual aids, but the implication was that they were only for village people, and training staff did not stoop to using them;

(5) In their practical work, the medical trainees were taught how to make a systematic study of a particular feature of village life—for example, how many houses there were of different materials and varied sizes, and locate these different houses on the village ground plan. This material, collected by the trainees, was then used by them in classes and discussions on such problems as village sanitation and the siting of wells.

396. Health problems in general in community development work have suffered as a result of the responsibility for different aspects of health falling under different ministries.

397. Some of these aspects of rural health are: drinking water supplies and other water supplies; housing and sanitation, soak pits and latrines; food habits and diet; infant care and training; family planning; sports and recreation.

398. The multi-purpose approach to community development can, at this stage, take a more comprehensive view of all the sides of village life which can help village families to improve and maintain their health. If this more comprehensive view were adopted and demonstrated in training centres, trainees might be stimulated to relate different sides of village life to each other, instead of observing and thinking and working in water-tight compartments.

C. Training for Specialized Fields

1. Tribal Areas

399. It has been recognized in India that community development in tribal areas presents certain particular problems, already discussed in more detail in Chapter VI. It is also well recognized that some tribal groups welcome community development activities with enthusiasm, and that some forms of social organization found among tribal peoples are well adapted to the key concepts of self-help and community-directed improvements in rural living.

400. Tribal areas vary greatly in the degree of remoteness from administrative and cultural influences. There are areas where education has gone ahead, and where educated men and women (especially the latter) are available for work in their own villages.

401. It is nevertheless true, as stated in Chapter VI above, that the majority of community development officers in tribal areas must come from outside these areas, and that they need special training if they are to make a success of community development work. So far, this training has been given only to social education officers but it is now recognized that block development officers and block extension officers also need a short kind of orientation course, and plans are going ahead for this in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. It has been suggested that primary school teachers going to teach in tribal areas should also be included in such a course. This seems essential in view of the role of the school as an acculturating influence.

402. The basis of the existing course for social education organizers and of the proposed new courses is the study of social anthropology, leading to a greater understanding of, and sympathy for, tribal cultures. The Mission suggests that lecturers in such a course should avoid giving too much theoretical anthropology, which cannot easily be assimilated by trainees who have done no previous theoretical studies in this field. It is sometimes also the case that lecturers adopt a half-conscious half-unconscious patronizing attitude about "understanding these simple people" which trainees easily pick up, and which is the worst possible attitude to adopt when beginning work in tribal areas.

403. It requires a deliberate effort from any worker, anywhere, to understand the values of another culture and to approach sympathetically different ways of living and different forms of social organization. It is these aims of understanding and sympathy which have to be dominant in the training courses if community development work is to take root in tribal cultures and assist tribal peoples to adjust to many kinds of social change. The study of social change needs to be given more prominence in these courses, and related directly to the study of the social organization, traditional economy and religious beliefs of the tribal peoples.

2. *Women's work*

404. The training for *gram sevikas* is, at present, being carried out under two main auspices: by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture in the home science extension wings of agricultural schools; and by the Central Social Welfare Board in their Kasturba training centres.

405. If this division of responsibility is maintained, there should be frequent contacts and exchange of views between the staff of the two types of training centres. It is not enough to have formal contacts between high officials at the state and Central Government level. There seem to be some fairly fundamental differences between the two types of training centres in the content and presentation of the courses, in the level of living of the trainees, and in the emphasis on the programmes to be carried out in the villages.

406. The Mission has stated its view in Chapter V that it is essential that at this critical juncture in women's work in villages there should be a mutual agreement about village programmes, and how best to train those who are recruited as *gram sevikas* for this work.

407. The *mukhya sevikas* who are graduates should have their training with the other social education organizers, but at some stage of their training they should, for several days, visit one of the home science extension wings, and see how the *gram sevikas,* whom they will later have to supervise, are trained. Some kind of occasional change-over between *mukhya sevikas* and a member of the staff of a home science wing might have great advantages in making the best use of the very scarce womanpower.

3. *School teachers*

408. The Ministry of Community Development and states governments have been aware for some time that teachers in primary schools could play a significant role in village development. In so far as the

school is considered one of the main units in the progressive village, the teachers have not only a responsibility for the children, but for what happens to the children after the primary school stage, and the role of education, in its widest sense, in the progress of the people. This was discussed more fully in Chapter V.

409. An attempt was made by organizing peripatetic teams to give short orientation courses to school teachers about community development. For various reasons, this method was found not to be successful. The states are now faced with the problem of hastening the process of compulsory education and therefore making full use of every available teacher. At the same time, they have to devise some method of effectively bringing school teachers into the community development programme. The Mission thinks that these objectives might be achieved by short intensive courses during the school vacation, but they need to be lively and interesting, emphasizing not only the teachers' role, but the general programme as well. It would, therefore, be more effective if teachers could be accommodated in an extension wing of an agricultural school for a short course, where they could learn about extension methods and mix with the village level workers in training.

410. Teachers who have shown exceptional interest and ability in community development programmes might be sent to orientation training centres, especially if, as has been suggested, a team approach in training is contemplated now and then, to include the village level worker, the *gram sevika* and the school teacher.

D. Content and Method of Training Courses

411. The syllabuses, carefully drawn up by expert committees at New Delhi to guide and delimit the community development courses of different types look very different when seen in operation at a training centre. There they appear to demand that the staff should pack a vast amount of information into a short space of time, and as everyone knows, the easiest way to do this is by a straight lecture method. Even if the lecturer is told to leave one third of his allotted time for questions and discussions, he will not readily forego any of the points he has carefully packed into his lecture period. The result is that when he takes the last five minutes, and asks if there are any questions, the trainees' minds are numbed by the flow of information, and they only ask some of the most obvious and superficial type of questions.

412. This failure to set up a lively interchange between the lecturer and the class is made worse by requiring lecturers to prepare in advance a synopsis of their lectures, and by issuing that synopsis to the students before the lecture. This is intended to obviate note taking and to promote discussion. The Mission observed that it did not by any means always have this effect. The assiduous note taker can miss many of the lecturer's best points, but the discriminating trainee can catch hold of, and write down, points he wants to ask the lecturer about, and so maintain his part in a "lively interchange". Watching classes sitting with folded arms and expressions ranging from polite attention to drowsy boredom, with the synopsis (often the lecture in full) on the table in front of them, caused the Mission to wonder how much of this procedure is waste of time, money and effort.

413. One effect of these over-detailed and over-comprehensive syllabuses is that, when trainees see them at the beginning of a course, they are overwhelmed by the amount of information, factual and ideological, that they must learn. They set to work to learn by the usual high school and college process of cramming and memorizing. This has two main effects: they feel that they have to teach this newly acquired information to the villagers, because that is what their community development assignment requires; and they are naturally prone to give the information in package form, more or less as it has been delivered to them. They do this with their minds lulled to sleep by much learning and teaching, and anything but alert to the real problems of the villages, and to the necessity for adapting, questioning, testing all that they have heard in their training course.

414. It is not difficult to see how government departments regard the provision of a detailed syllabus and its faithful implementation as a guarantee of "value for money" in a training course. The Mission gathered enough evidence from all sides that though training courses lay down certain layers of information in the minds of the trainees, they do not stimulate a lively, alert, sensitive approach to village and rural problems.

415. How can this be achieved without jettisoning the necessary basis of factual information and of accepted teaching about the aims and methods of Community Development?

416. The Mission suggests that there are several directions in which this "educational" approach can be improved, and some of them are already being tried out by lively and enterprising principals, who are not, however, always able to persuade their more conservative staff to adopt these methods:

(1) Members of expert committees responsible for syllabuses should be in close touch with the changing village conditions. They should also visit training centres after the syllabuses have been issued and impress on principals the importance of adapting the syllabus, of selecting from it and of adding to it where conditions require such changes. They should invite correspondence from principals about these adaptations;

(2) An appendix should be attached to each syllabus, containing actual problems which arise in a village context, relating to village organization, the emergence of new leaders, the needs and attitudes of youth groups, farmers' resistances to new methods of cultivation or of obtaining credit, and so on. Such examples should be drawn from real life situations, and not invented by someone remote from village realities. The examples should be changed frequently as conditions change;

(3) The lecturer or the leader of a discussion group can either pose the problem and invite immediate discussion; or, and this is probably the most effective way, he can suggest that a small group take a problem, work on it for a time and report back. These problems and their elucidation and proposed solutions must be kept very close to real village situations, otherwise they become mere academic exercises;

(4) The Mission found an almost complete dearth of case studies relating to community development and social change in India, such as the volume edited by E.D. Spicer, entitled *Human Problems in Technological Change,* or the volume edited by B.D. Paul, *Health, Culture and Community.* The Mission was aware of the slowly increasing number of contemporary village studies by Indian and foreign sociologists and anthropologists, but they are still very few, and do not appear to be used imaginatively in training courses. Yet these studies provide the kind of village material round which teaching and discussion should be planned to give it a realistic and not an idealistic slant, and should be used in orientation courses, extension courses, and panchayat training camps.

E. Training the Instructors

417. An earlier survey of community development training in India pointed out that, whereas training courses, like the community development projects, had, at the outset, been experimental and adaptable, they had, half way through the second Five-Year Plan, "become bogged down and were doing their vital task in a routine way".

418. In order to help the principals and staff of training centres to recapture a zest for adapting and experimenting, the Dehra Dun Institute was opened in January 1959 to give a three months' course to principals and staff of extension wings and training centres.

419. During its visit to the Institute, the Mission found that the construction of the course offered several new approaches in group work and individual study. But it too suffers from having a formidable syllabus which will have to be handled with a great deal of flexibility and freedom to adapt and select, if it is not to repeat many of the mistakes of existing training courses.

420. In particular, the Mission considered that this course is an opportunity for getting away from generalities about community development, and throwing overboard all the well-worn cliches. Instead, the course can aim at trying to examine in specific detail how certain village situations appear to village people—to the successful farmer who employs labour; to the small farmer and his hard-worked wife; to the artisan who wants to improve his craft; to the landless labourer who wants to be certain of next week's meals and of employment all through the year. In the light of such real situations talk about the "rural mine" and group psychology can be scrapped; and various kinds of "principles" of planning and action can be discarded as listed, and rediscovered by trainees for themselves.

421. Imagination in handling concepts, originality in thinking about problems, ability to construct a synthesis of apparently diverse approaches, alertness to examine all existing programmes and methods—these can be, indeed well may be, some of the hallmarks of this important experiment.

422. The number of trainees at the centre is at present small, and so is the staff. The Mission suggests that the aim should not be to add to the staff on a subject basis, but rather to bring in for a period men and women with fresh original minds as far as teaching is concerned, and with recent experience of village studies, if possible on a recognized research basis.

F. The Central Institute of Study and Research in Community Development at Mussoorie

423. The Mission much appreciated the opportunity to visit the Institute of Study and Research in Community Development at the end of its stay in India. It considers that it may well become a power-house for interchange of thought and experience on community development. The members of courses so far have been mainly men in the administrative service, such as collectors and assistant development commissioners. Their fuller understanding of the aims and methods of community development should go far towards modifying the formality of administrative relationships with community development staff and the village people. It would also, if it proves to be an effective course, give administrative officers a more flexible view of their own job, and open up to them new possibilities of staff co-operation and the conduct of meetings.

424. There is, at present, an experimental attitude about the course which augurs well for its future. The staff, both permanent and visiting, have experience of experiments in group work in different countries, well adapted to making the most of a short course, at which busy men for a few weeks lay down their responsibilities and expose themselves to new techniques. The comments in some of the evaluations of the course by members are valuable for its future direction.

425. It is intended to set up a research wing at the Institute to investigate problems in community development as they arise. This is a difficult plan to implement in the remoteness of the hills. A more fruitful immediate use of research funds might be to add one or more "research assistants" to the staff at Mussoorie, whose job would be to work through the existing material (and it is voluminous) on community development in India; to index and catalogue it; and to make extracts from it and short bibliographies for use by the course members who have little time and not enough knowledge to hunt through a great deal of library material themselves.

426. It would also be useful to build up a collection for reference purposes, of reports, books and articles on community development in other countries, and of the major international meetings and conferences on this subject. This collection should also be handled by the research assistants, and extracts and bibliographies prepared.

G. Further Research Proposals

427. The Mission has, as far as possible, examined the chief contributions on research lines to the community development movement in India. It is encouraging to find that university departments and research institutes, as well as official bodies, like the Planning Evaluation Organization, are training research personnel to investigate problems in the fields of economic and social change in rural

428. Throughout this report, the Mission has made various suggestions for further study and research which could help forward the planning and adapting of community development programmes, and which could, in particular, form the basis of material to be used at training centres.

429. Many of the present urgent problems in community development, such as the "blocking of lines of communication", discussed in Chapter V, do not fall under any single academic discipline. The Mission suggests that India will have to adopt the multi-disciplinary approach in research, as an extension perhaps of its belief in the multipurpose approach in action programmes. The most important task at present is to formulate some of these urgent problems, and to isolate them in the research sense, and then to invite a small group of scholars to discuss how such problems could best be studied. It is important to realize that these are study problems first, possibly leading to later action, but needing at the moment to be examined in an atmosphere of factual reality combined with good academic theory.

430. In calling in different disciplines to be part of these discussions on research methods, the Mission hopes that political scientists studying problems of public administration will not be forgotten.

431. After such round-table discussions, the actual research could be allocated to the centre, university or research institute where the best combination of facilities seemed to be available.

432. The Mission was aware of the proposal to start studies in community development as part of university courses. It believes, however, that in order to provide and classify material for undergraduate courses, it is essential during the next five years to build up the research material just referred to, and to attract graduates to apply their basic discipline to the many problems in community development.

ANNEX

ITINERARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION MISSION TO INDIA

(23 November 1958 to 3 April 1959)

23 Nov. 1958	Member of the Mission assembled in *New York.*
24 to 29 Nov.	Briefing at the United Nations Headquarters, *New York.*
2 to 4 Dec.	Briefing at the Headquarters of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, the Asian Regional Offices of the Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund at *Bangkok.*
6 Dec.	Briefing at the United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organization Research Centre on Social Implications of Industrialization in Southern Asia, *Calcutta.*
7 Dec.	Arrival in *New Delhi.*
8 Dec.	Meeting with the Minister of Community Development.
9 Dec.	Meeting with the Planning Commission.
10—13 Dec.	Meetings with the Ministers of Food and Agriculture, Commerce and Industry, and Development Commissioner, Small Scale Industries, Minister for Health, Minister of Education, the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Tribes and Chairman of the Social Welfare Board.
14 Dec.	Sunday. Visit to India 1958 Exhibition.
15 Dec. and 16 Dec.	Individual appointments with Indian experts.
17 Dec.	Visit to Nilokheri Extension and Orientation Training Centres, Nilokheri Development Block.

PUNJAB STATE (17 TO 20 DEC.)

17—20 Dec.	Discussions at Chandigarh with State Authorities (Chief Minister, Minister for Planning and Heads of Departments) and visits to Ludhiana Agricultural College, Jugiana Model Farm, Extension Training Centre at Nabha, villages in the Nabha C.D. Block, and other blocks in Ambala district.
21 Dec.	Sunday—halt at Delhi.

RAJASTHAN STATE (22 TO 23 DEC.)

22—23 Dec. . .	Visit to and discussions with the Development Cmo-missioner-*cum*-Chief Secretary and the heads of departments in the Secretariat, and visit to villages of Jhotwara and Sanganer blocks, and near Ajmer (Mr. Coldwell and Mr. Dumont only).

UTTAR PRADESH STATE (27 DEC. TO 3 JAN. 1959)

7—30 Dec. . .	Discussion with the Chief Minister, Minister for Planning and Development and Development Commissioner and Heads of Departments at Lucknow.
	Visit to Bakshi-ka-Talab Orientation and Extension Training Centre and the Planning, Research and Action Institute.
30 Dec. to 1 Jan. .	Visit Projects and Ghats in District Varanasi and consolidation and development works in Ghazipur district and return to Varanasi.
1 Jan. . .	Leave for Allahabad.
2—3 Jan. . .	Visit to Allahabad Agricultural Institute, to Naini Industrial Estate and villages in that area.
4 Jan. (Sunday) .	Halt at Delhi.

ANDHRA PRADESH STATE (5 TO 9 JAN. 1959)

5—6 Jan. . . .	In Hyderabad—discussions with the Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh, and Minister for Planning, A. P. Meeting with Professors of the Osmania University.
6—7 Jan. . .	Visit to Shadnagar and Vicarabad—Panchayat Samithis' centres of activity, including Mahila Mandals, Youth Clubs, etc. Discussions with block staff.
8 Jan. . . .	Visit to Rajendranagar Orientation Training Centre and other Centres.
9 Jan. . .	Meeting with Members of Informal Consultative Committee. Discussions with the Development Commissioner, and heads of departments.

MADRAS STATE (9 TO 15 JAN.)

9 Jan. . . .	Preliminary discussions with the Development Commissioner.
10—12 Jan. .	Visit to blocks nearby (Kolandalur—Kadambathur—Perambakkam—Madurantakem) and visit to Nazarathpet Milk Co-operative Society.
	Meeting with the State Informal Consultative Committee

13—14 Jan. . . .	Leave Madurai, Visit Gandhigram-Training Centres and villages nearby. Visit to villages around Madurai. Discussions with Collector and other officials.
15 Jan.	Leave for Trivandrum.

KERALA STATE (15 TO 18 JAN.)

15 to 16 Jan. . . .	Discussions with the Chief Minister, Minister for Planning, with the Development Commissioner and Programme Evaluation Officer. Interviews with representatives of voluntary organizations at Trivandrum.
16 to 18 Jan.	Visits to villages and institutions in Neyyattinkara and in Nedumangad Block. Visits to WHO Environmental Sanitation Pilot Project, Extension Training Centre in Rottarakara, and Indo-Norwegian Fishery Project at Quilon (Neendakara)

MYSORE STATE (18 TO 22 JAN.)

18 Jan. . . .	Preliminary discussions with the Development Commissioner in Bangalore.
19 Jan. . . .	Visit to Hosabudanur village and the Community Development Block Office Mandya, with the Multipurpose Co-operative Society and Extension Training Centres.
20 Jan. . . .	Visit to Central Food Technological Research Institute Mysore, Nanjangud Vidyapeetha—Adult Education Council, Nanjangud and villages in the Gundlupet Block.
21 Jan. . . .	Visits to Hittanahalli Village, C.D. Block Malavalli, and Farmers' Forum at Kanakapura. Visit to the ILO Asian Regional Office at Bangalore and meeting with the Development Commissioner and heads of departments.
22 Jan. . . .	Interviews with voluntary organizations :— 1. Bharat Sevak Samaj 2. Bharat Sevak Dal 3. Young Farmers' Association 4. Social Welfare Advisory Board 5. Young Men's Christian Association and meeting the Members of the Informal Consultative Committee on C.D. Programme and the Estimates Committee.

NEW DELHI (23 JAN. TO 26 JAN.)

23 Jan. .	Arrival in Delhi from Bangalore
24 Jan. . . .	Meeting with the officers of the Ministry of Community Development and individual appointments with Indian experts.
25—26 Jan. . .	Sunday and Republic Day—halt at Delhi.

During the period 27 Jan. TO 4 Feb.	The Mission divided and three States were visited during this period, as follows :

1. Mr. M. J. Coldwell and Mr. A. Wojcicki — Orissa State
2. Dr. Margaret Read — Bihar State.
3. Prof. René Dumont — West Bengal State

ORISSA STATE (28 JAN. TO 4 FEB. MR. M. J. COLDWELL AND MR. A. WOJCICKI ONLY)

28 Jan. . . .	Discussion with Community Development Commissioner and visit to Home Economics Training Centre at Bhubaneshwar
29 Jan. . . .	Visit to villages in Pipli block and the Tribal Exhibition
30. Jan. —1 Feb. .	Visit to villages near Angul and the Ashram School at Angul
	Visit village institutions in Bargarh block and the Barapali Project of the American Friends Service Committee
	Visit to Hirakud dam
2—4 Feb. . .	Visit to villages in Konarak block, Shandikole Ashram School and discussions with the Chief Minister State Consultative Committee, Director of Community Projects and Programme Evaluation Officer.

BIHAR STATE (28 JAN.—4 FEB. DR. M. READ ONLY)

29—30 Jan. . .	Visit to village institutions of Noorsarai, Rajgir, Bodh Gaya block and resettled villages in the Talaiya dam area.
31 Jan. . . .	Visit to various training centres for community development and health personnel at Ranchi, the Administrative Training School and the Tribal Research Institute.
1 Feb. . . .	Visit to multipurpose Project Bishumpur in tribal area and to villages of resettled nomads
2 Feb. . . .	Visit to Ormanjhi block to Seed Multiplication Farm and Popular Science Institute.

3—4 Feb. . Discussion with representatives of various voluntary organizations, State Panchayat, Bihar-Cooperative Federation, Information Consultative Committee, Heads of Departments and Governor of the State.

WEST BENGAL STATE (28 JAN. TO 4 FEB. PROF. RENÉ DUMONT)

28 Jan. . . . Visits to the Indian Statistical Institute and discussion with the Joint Director of Agriculture, W. Bengal.

29. Jan. . . . Visit to Rural University at Santiniketan and discussion with professors and other staff.

30 Jan.— 1 Feb. . Visit to villages in Sriniketan, Bolpur and Mohammedbazar blocks and discussion with the Project Evaluation Officer.

2—3 Feb. . . Visit to villages in Memari and Baruipur blocks and the township and Industrial Estate at Baruipur.

4 Feb. . . . Discussions with the Informal Consultative Committee, Heads of Departments, Farmers' Forum and Community Development Commissioner at Calcutta.

On 4 Feb. evening all members of the Mission reassembled in Calcutta and left on 5 Feb. for Bombay.

BOMBAY STATE (5 TO 16 FEB.)

5 Feb. . . . Discussions in Bombay with the Development Commissioner.

6—7 Feb. . . Discussions with the Chief Minister, Minister for Planning, the Development Commissioner and series of meetings with (*a*) Informal Consultative Committee ; (*b*) Vice-Chairman of Self-Government Bodies; (*c*) and selected members of the Block Development Committees.

9—10 Feb. . . Departure for Poona.

Visits to institutions in Poona such as Gokhale Institute, Servants of India Society, Decan College and representatives of Primary School Teachers Association.

Visit to villages in Haveli Block.

11 Feb. . . In Bombay ; consultations with the Bombay State Co-operative Unions and a number of voluntary organizations.

12—13 Feb. . Visit to villages in Jasdan Block and around Rajkot.

14 Feb. . Visit to the Kaira District Milk Producers' Union at Anand.

15—16 Feb. . .	Visit to Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Bombay. Travel to Aurangabad and visit to villages in Silod block and Khuldabad and Degaon villages.

MADHYA PRADESH STATE (17—21 FEB.)

17 Feb. . . .	Discussion of the programme with the Development Commissioner or his Deputy and visits to villages of Barasia Block, Sehore District.
18 Feb. . .	Visits to villages in Sanchi Block.
19—20 Feb. . .	Visits to villages in the neighbourhood of Hoshangabad. Return to Bhopal.
	Meeting with the heads of departments to discuss the programme in Madhya Pradesh State. Discussion with the Chief Minister.

NOTE : Dr. Read proceeded earlier to Uttar Pradesh to have a special programme there on 21 and 22 Feb.

Prof. René Dumont visited village Sirsode in Shivpuri Block (M.P.) on 20—21 Feb.

23—24 Feb. . .	The Mission (except for Mr. Wojcicki, who returned to Delhi) stayed at Agra for discussions with Balwant Rajput College, University Institute of Social Sciences and villages nearby.
25—28 Feb. . .	In Delhi. Discussions and individual work of the members of the Mission on the outline of the report and on the problems to be raised in the final discussions with the authorities in Delhi.
1—2 March . .	Visit to Central Institute of Study and Research in Community Development, Mussoorie and Training Centre at Dehra Dun.
3 March . . .	Meeting with the Central Consultative Committee on Community Development in Delhi.
4—6 March . .	Final discussions with the Ministry of Community Development, Chairman and members of the Planning Commission, Programme Evaluation Organization and some individual experts to clarify further questions and to discuss the main points of the report.

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7 March . . .	Mission left India for Rome
9—10 March .	Consultations with FAO at Rome
11 March . .	Mission arrived in Geneva
12 March to 3 April .	Work on the report and consultations in Geneva with ILO, UNESCO and WHO.

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